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## HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY.

### MEMOIR OF THE LATE RICHARD HURD, D. D. BISHOP OF WORCESTER.

[*Concluded from p.* 463.]

MR. HURD, had now passed several years on his rectory of Thurcaston, where amidst his literary pursuits, he attained, as an intelligent friend has informed us, "on unquestionable authority," the truly honourable character of "an exemplary parish-priest." He had indeed, during this period, so much secluded himself from the world, that a witty nobleman, we believe Lord Chesterfield, is said to have replied to an inquiry made at court respecting the author of the Dialogues and the Commentator on Horace, that he was not dead, but *buried*. He was now however to appear again in that society which his literary accomplishments had well qualified him to adorn, and where the road of preferment soon opened to his view.

In 1765, he became assistant preacher at the Rolls Chapel, and the same year he was appointed "preacher to the honourable Society of Lincoln's-Inn," succeeding Dr. Ashton, who had been the successor of Warburton *. This appointment he owed to the friendship of the honourable Charles York, with whom he appears, by a passage in the Letters on Chivalry †, to have maintained a very familiar literary intercourse. In 1767, through the influence of his friend the Bishop, he gained the arch-deaconry of Gloucester, and in 1768, he received at Cambridge, his degree of Doctor of Divinity.

In 1772, Dr. Hurd published, in two volumes, "Select Works" of Cowley "with a preface and notes." The editor says of his author in the preface, that "every thing he wrote is either so good or so bad, that in all reason a separation should be made." He attributes "this

* Gent. Mag. Yet all the obituaries, even that in the G. M. represent Hurd, as the *immediate* successor of Warburton, who resigned the preachership on his advancement to the prelacy, in 1760.

† Hurd's Dialogues, &c. 5th ed. iii. 214.

striking difference in the compositions of the same man, whose genius and learning are unquestionable," to his having "generally followed the taste of his time, which was the worst imaginable; and rarely his own, which was naturally excellent." From this selection are excluded, the Davideis, the Pindaric Odes and the Mistress. The Prose Essays, which are written in a style for the age of Cowley, remarkably easy and unaffected, "are given entire," and are justly declared by the editor to "have no common merit."

This *selection* has been censured without sufficient reason. Cowley himself justifies it as his editor remarks, by what he proposed respecting the poems of *Shakespeare*, *Fletcher* and *Jonson**. That a scholar such as Dr. Hurd, should distinguish the works of a poet according to his own taste and judgment, was quite in character. But when he observes that "it is enough if this small collection go down to posterity†" as if Cowley would no longer be read except in the edition of Hurd, this was truly *warburtonian*. The readers of the Poet, while they wished to possess the selection which came to a third or fourth edition, were not contented with it. A third volume was soon published, containing all the pieces omitted, that Hurd's Cowley might be complete. Of the opinions on the propriety of this selection, Dr. Kippis has given a large account in his additions to the life of Cowley‡.

The publications of our author were hitherto all *literary*, except the assize sermon in 1752. He was now to appear in his character of a divine. Dr. Hurd had been appointed in 1768, the preacher of a lecture, founded that year by Bishop Warburton "to prove the truth of revealed religion in general, and of the Christian in particular, from the completion of the prophecies in the Old and New Testament, which relate to the Christian church, especially to the apostacy of Papal Rome." The twelve sermons which composed this lecture were published in 1772, according to the appointment of the founder. They are entitled "an introduction to the study of the prophecies concerning the Christian church and in particular concerning the church of Papal Rome."

The author distinguishes between extraordinary coincidencies or fortunate conjectures, and the "vast variety of predictions which are to be found in the scriptures of the Old and New Testament a great part of them delivered with the utmost degree of minuteness and particularity‖."

* "Author's Preface."—Hurd's Cowley, 3d. ed. i. 67.

† Id. Pref. p. viii. ‡ Biog. Brit. 2nd. ed. iv. 378—380.

‖ "Introduction," &c. pp. 98—106. The preacher here notices "the story of Romulus and his twelve vultures," and the verses of Seneca, which might be supposed to predict "the discoveries of Columbus." The reader may find the last noticed by the learned Spencer, in his "discourse of the vanity of vulgar prophecies," p 88. where he says that "hath been concluded *the voice of God*, a prophetic instinct refering to the discovery of *America* in these latter ages, which was indeed but *the voice of a man*, a rational conjecture proceeding upon a probable persuasion, that so great a part of the globe of the earth was not all sea, and so would in time be found."—See also Bacon's Essays, xxxv. Of Prophecies, ad fin.

He states the general argument from prophecy, and the prophecies respecting Christ's first and second coming. The predicted Antichrist he discovers in the church of Rome, but so far as appears, in no other church in Christendom. Perhaps, as the poet says of death,

—like objects pressing on the sight,
It had advanced too near him to be seen.

In his sermon on "the style and method of the Apocalypse" he professes himself greatly indebted to the *Clavis Apocolyptica* of the learned Joseph Mede, on whom he passes a just elogium*. Sir Isaac Newton is quoted in connexion with Mede, and called also an incomparable man, as if his Unitarian heresy had been forgotten. Dr. Clarke too is named with the respect due to an orthodox divine. Dr. Hurd, delivered the twelve discourses "to polite and crowded audiences," and acquired great reputation by the performance. We learn this especially from a passage in Bishop Newton's life, written by himself. He says "it was objected that few lecturers could be found to do credit to the Institution like the first lecturer, Dr. Hurd. The objection was really so well founded, that after the third in succession, a fourth lecturer could not easily be procured, and there was a failure at least for some time †.

To display with ability the corruptions of the church of Rome, and to discover nothing but purity in the church of England, was a duteous service, becoming a son of that church, and which could not fail to be highly applauded. Yet those who enquired after "the faith once delivered to the saints," in the writings of apostles and evangelists rather than in the creeds of churches "by law established," could not give their unqualified approbation to this work of Dr. Hurd. Among these the Rev. Edward Evanson was distinguished. This respectable scholar and excellent man was then meditating those sacrifices of valuable clerical preferment and more valuable expectations, which he soon after accomplished.

Mr. Evanson entered largely into a consideration of the "Introduction to the Prophecies," and gave his judgment of the work in a pamphlet, published in 1777, and which "would have appeared much sooner" had not the author been harassed by "a tedious prosecution." The pamphlet is entitled "A Letter to the Right Rev. the Lord Bishop

* "He was a candid sincere man; disinterested and unambitious; of no faction in religion or government, but solely devoted to the love of truth, and to the investigation of it. His learning was vast, but well chosen and well digested; and his understanding, in no common degree, strong and capacious.—Cool, deliberate and severe, in forming his judgments, he was so far from being obsequious to the fancies of other men, that he was determined only, by the last degree of evidence, to acquiesce in any conclusions of his own.

"In short with no vanity to indulge, for he was superior to this last infirmity of ingenious men, with no interest in view—with no spleen to gratify, for even neglect and solitude could not engender this unmanly vice in him, with no oblique purposes I say, which so often mislead the pens of other writers, but with the single, unmixed love of truth, he dedicated his great talents to the study of the prophetic scriptures." Introduction, &c. pp. 337—331.

† Bishop Newton's Life by himself, prefixed to his works. 4to. i. 117.

of Litchfield and Coventry; wherein the importance of the prophecies of the New Testament and the nature of the grand apostacy predicted in them, are particularly and impartially considered." The Letter-writer, was of the same college with the Bishop, and though his junior by several years, probably knew him at the university. Among the motives for this address, are "the sincere esteem early contracted for his lordship's elegant manners and amiable disposition, together with a veneration for his great learning and eminent abilities*."

Mr. Evanson contends, that "the characters of the predicted apostacy, should be sought for in the doctrines of a church, not in the local situation of its primate." He then enters upon an able examination of the creeds professed, and the authority assumed by the reformed churches which the civil power has erected to shew that there are "scarce any circumstances in the prophecies of the New Testament which are in reality more peculiarly applicable to the Roman, than to all the established churches in Europe." As to "the fatal tree of Antichristian superstition" he remarks that "the reforming princes diligently lopped off those boughs which most incommoded them, but the root, the trunk, and main branches they left fair and flourishing, and even engaged themselves still to protect the same baneful tree in that state to which they had contracted it †."

Those who have observed the "prudent caution," as Mr. Evanson expresses it, generally maintained by dignitaries of the church, will easily believe that no reply was given to this letter. It was indeed merely, though respectfully noticed a few months afterwards ‡, on the author's resigning into the Bishop's hands as his diocesan those preferments of which he could no longer consistently perform the duties, unlike some later reformers, who satisfy themselves to partake the emoluments of a church, whose faith they deem Antichristian, or complain of persecution, should they be forced to abandon them.

In 1774, Dr. Hurd had become Bishop of Litchfield and Coventry, a preferment to which he is said to have been recommended by Lord Mansfield, who after the *premature* ‖ death of the honourable Charles Yorke, was his principal court-patron. The Heads of Emanuel College justly regarding this honour paid to her distinguished son, complimented the Bishop in a Latin address, affectionately recollecting his residence among them, and taking due care also to compliment "our

* "A Letter," &c 1777. pp. 4 and 128. † Id. pp. 13, 16, 28.
‡ See Mr. Evanson's Life. M. Repos. i. 6.

‖ The close of this gentleman's life, was very affecting. He was made Lord Chancellor, January 17. 1770, created a Peer the next day, and died two days after. See An. Reg. xiii. 181 and 186. He is there said to have "suddenly departed this life by the rupture of a vessel inwardly." His *sudden* death has however, been generally attributed to the reproof he received from his brother, the late Lord Hardwicke, on his having ventured to succeed Lord Camden, who had been displaced for maintaining opinions too favourable to the liberty of the subject. Mr. C. Yorke, was one of the Sons of the famous Lord Hardwicke, who had been Chancellor more than twenty years.

good prince" with whom "nothing but desert prevails" in the bestowment of royal favours! The Bishop addressed in Latin, a suitable reply *, and has left by his will a more substantial testimony of regard to his college by a liberal benefaction designed to promote the objects of that Institution †.

The royal favour continued to attend our divine. In 1776, he was appointed preceptor to the Prince of Wales and the young secular Bishop of Osnaburgh, now Duke of York. For such an office, Bishop Hurd's attainments had eminently qualified him, nor did the modern notions of episcopal obligation forbid him to reconcile the necessary attendance on a court, with the claims of an extensive diocese on his spiritual direction. His friend Mason, in a Sonnett prefixed to a new edition of Caractacus, celebrates this appointment, reminding the Bishop of the time

When "in low Thurcaston's sequestered bower,"
He praised the strain, because he loved the friend.

Nor does it appear that any contemporary divine, ever thought of censuring engagements which comprehend duties, seemingly incompatible. There was once indeed a prelate of the church of England, whose conduct in similar circumstances was singularly scrupulous. We refer to Burnett, who when the education of the Duke of Gloucester, the presumptive heir to the crown, was pressed upon him by King William, endeavoured to resign his bishoprick. That being refused, he would accept the office of preceptor, only on the condition of his pupil's residing at Windsor, which was in his diocese, and his having a sufficient time allowed him, to inspect the other parts of it ‡. But Burnett was a *rara avis* among modern prelates, and has, we believe, been even called a presbyterian bishop.

Soon afterhis appointment to the office of preceptor, Bishop Hurd resigned the preachership at Lincoln's-Inn. At the request of the Benchers, he published in 1777, &c. three volumes of sermons, delivered in their chapel. These have been admired as elegant compositions, such as might have been expected from the pen of their author. Many of the sermons are on subjects of Christian morality. The divinity is truly orthodox. Dr. Hurd brings into the *pulpit*, what many grave churchmen have been content to leave behind them in the *desk*, a "God the Son" as one of the objects of Christian worship. The *atonement* is held up to admiration, as a doctrine "awfully stupendous—at which reason stands aghast, and faith herself is half confounded." The reformation of the church of England, according to her grateful and zealous advocate, was stopped just at the exact point of Christian purity, and succeeded far better than in "the case of the foreign Protestant churches," because it "was

* Nichols's Leicestershire. Fol. iii. 1072.

† The Bishop has bequeathed 2000*l.* stock in the 4 per Cents Consuls, one half for the augmentation of the Mastership, and the other half to increase the stipends of the four Senior Fellows.

‡ See Burnett's Life by his Son, annexed to the "History." Fol. ii. 718.

not carried on with us in a precipitate tumultuous manner," but "advanced, under the eye of the magistrate, by slow degrees; nay, it was more than once, checked and kept back by him*." Such is the natural and easy progress of a kingdom, which "is not of this world." Bishop Hurd, indeed, unlike our Burnetts and Tillotsons of former, or our Laws and Watsons of later times, appears to have regarded the church of England, as a poet was once complimented by his friend,

I read thee over with a lover's eye.
Thou hast no faults, or I no faults can spy,
Thou art all beauty, or all blindness I.

Some passages in the Sermons, drew from Dr. Priestley "Considerations" addressed to their author at the close of the "History of the Corruptions of Christianity." The historian describes it as "one of the worst symptoms of the present times, that men of the greatest eminence in the church, and of the most unquestionable ability, appear to be either wholly indifferent to the subject, or, instead of promoting a farther reformation, employ all their ingenuity to make men acquiesce in the present system." He adds—"to see such men as Bishop Hurd in this class of writers, a class so little respectable, when he is qualified to class with Tillotson, Hoadley, and Clarke, equally excites one's pity and indignation †."

The indignation upon this occasion appears to have been reciprocal, and expressed by our prelate somewhat coarsely. If the learned Editor of "Tracts," &c. whom we have so often had occasion to quote, had been rightly informed, Bishop Hurd allowed himself to distinguish the work of his opponent by the "emphatical but indelicate name" of "miserable trash ‡." Nor are there wanting traces of this indignation still rankling in our author's bosom, when preparing his biographical "Discourse" on Warburton. We there read of "*English Disciplinarians*, now rising again in the shape of *Levellers* and *Socinians;* but to fall again, in good time, by one or other of our learned clergy, going forth against them, in the spirit of order and orthodoxy ‖." We are also warned against some "who glory in Socinian impieties §." Such is the railing accusation brought against his opponent, by a scholar and divine in defect of argument; yet the character and writings of Bishop Law, with whom he had sat on the same bench, might have relieved Socinians from this charge of impiety. Bishop Watson too, was still living to shew, and we trust he has not yet altered his opinion, that Socinians might be as good Christians as himself, or the most distinguished champions of the orthodox church ¶.

* Hurd's Sermons, i. 17, ii. 287, and i. 239. † "Hist. of Corrupt." ii. 471.
‡ "Tracts by Warburton," &c. p. 169.
‖ "Discourse," &c. pp. 84, 85. "This prediction" as to "one half of it," the Bishop considered "completely fulfilled" by "Dr. Horsley's Charge, and his unanswerable Letters."—See the Note Ib. p. 85. § Ib. p. 112.
¶ "Newton and Locke were esteemed Socinians, Lardner was an avowed one: Clarke and Whiston were declared Arians; Bull and Waterland were professed

The publications of our author after he had attained the mitre, were not numerous. In 1777, appeared his sermon preached before the Lords on a fast-day, during the American war, and the same year a Charge to the Clergy of his dioceses, at his primary visitation. This Charge attracted some notice, on account of a panegyric, which it contained on the established "ritual," its defects, if there are any, being in the Bishop's judgment, "purely imaginary or certainly unimportant." A recommendation is subjoined "to submit all deliberations of this sort to the wisdom of the church itself." This recommendation appeared unsatisfactory to "a country clergyman" who presently published "Remarks" on this Charge, and was likely enough to differ with the Bishop, for he writes in the character of one of the petitioning clergy *.

In 1781, Bishop Hurd was advanced to the See of Worcester, and not long after had an opportunity of refusing the offer of a translation to Canterbury †. Nor is it surprising that our prelate with his literary habits should prefer the opulent leisure which the See of Worcester afforded to those ceremonious attentions on a court which custom has annexed to the splendour of the primacy ‡. He now chiefly resided at the Episcopal palace, in the sequestered village of Hartlebury, where he has left a noble library for the use of his successors, containing a great part of the libraries of Pope and Warburton, with a large collection formed during several years by his own taste and judgment ||.

In 1783, our prelate had been appointed "Clerk of the Closet," and in 1786, preached before the Lords on January 30,—treating the trite subject of "King Charles's Martyrdom," not illiberally §. This was the last public service which the bishop performed, and from this time he appears to have confined himself to his literary occupations and the duties of his diocese. In 1788, he published, in 7 vols. 4to. an edition of the Works of Warburton, which drew upon him as we have had occasion to notice, the severe animadversion of an anonymous but scarcely an unknown scholar and divine. The Editor of Warburton had excluded from his works several juvenile translations in verse and prose. These the Editor of "Tracts," &c. thought worthy of republication, and seized the

Athanasians; who will take upon him to say, that these men were not equal to each other, in probity and scriptural knowledge."—Watson's Theol. Tracts, vol. 6. Catal: on "Letter" on the Logos. Bishops Hurd and Watson with Bishop Law, who altered the last edition of his Theory, that he might leave nothing inconsistent with what is called Socinianism, are cotemporary evidences of the small success with which church and state have been employed for ages, in preventing "diversity of opinions" and "procuring consent touching true religion."

* M. Rev. lvii. 411, 412.

† Nicholls's Leicestershire, iii. 1073, Mr. N. mentions his "receiving this fact from the Bishop himself."

‡ Besides a very frequent attendance on royal Levees, a panegyrical oration is expected from the primate on every royal birth-day. Thus extremes meet, and this prince among ecclesiastics, shares his task with that humble manufacturer of odes, the Laureat.

Whose annual pension, brings forth annual praise.

|| Nicholls's Leicestershire, iii. 1073. § See M. Rev.

occasion to draw again into notice the forgotten "Tracts by a Warburtonian" which we have sufficiently described. The Preface and Dedication are compositions such as might be expected from the taste and erudition of the supposed editor. The hostility to Bishop Hurd, which they so classically express in various forms of sarcasm, can be attributed only to some deep-felt injury. On this subject we have no information, for we are persuaded that the magnanimity of the learned editor could not have allowed him so severely to retaliate merely on the Bishop's "rooted antipathy—to long vernacular Sermons from Dr. Parr*."

In 1794, appeared the long expected Life of Warburton, designed to be prefixed as a discourse, by way of preface to his works. This was the last of our prelate's literary labours which had extended through nearly half a century. He appears to have passed the remainder of his life in an almost uninterrupted seclusion from the busy world. He died at Hartlebury Castle, May 28, 1808, in the 88th year of his age, and was privately interred, by his own direction, in the church yard of that village. There is no account of any papers left by the Bishop for publication, except a collection of letters to and from eminent persons of his acquaintance, many of which are referred to in the Life of Warburton. It is much to be regretted that this elegant and interesting piece of biography should hitherto have been confined to the purchasers of the Works, of which only 250 copies were printed. A republication of the discourse would not only gratify curiosity respecting Warburton, but discover the light in which our Prelate in his latter days, chose to be regarded, among the ecclesiastics of his time. He seems peculiarly desirous of appearing as the coadjutor of Horsley, that bold and able advocate of high-church orthodoxy †. There is at the same time, an insinuation against a "Socinian comment—on the Lord's Supper" by an "eminent writer‡ which is probably designed for Hoadley and his "Plain Account." Like Warburton he regarded "Socinianism as a sort of infidelity in disguise, and gave it no quarter‖."

Yet while he treated Dissenters, especially those reputed heretical with general contempt and occasional calumny, in his writings, his behaviour to those of them, with whom he had any intercourse, "was marked by respect and kindness." We state this on the authority of a friend already mentioned, whose local situation has given him opportunities of gaining correct information. On the same authority we add that our Prelate was greatly "respected and loved by his clergy and his neighbours" and that "when officious bigots called upon him to censure objects of their dislike, he was lenient and considerate in the greatest degree, and when applied to, some years ago, by a nobleman about the court to head a loyal association against republicans, he

* Tracts by Warburton and a Warburtonian. p. 170. and Discourse. p. 17.—Note.

† See a former Note

‡ Discourse. p. 90.

‖ Ib. p. 119.

refused the application, alledging that the laws were sufficiently vigorous for their own protection."

Bishop Hurd, by the strict decorum of his life, the liberal courtesy of his manners, and the reputation which he justly acquired as a scholar and a divine, would have been an ornament to any communion, while his opinions respecting the magistrate's superintendance of religion, and a disposition to cast an awful veil over mysteries rather than to attempt their explanation, would have probably caused him to leave as corrupt in doctrine and as superstitious in ceremonials as he found it, any church in christendom where he happened to be placed. Those who, after the scriptural researches of more than two centuries, would now stop in the road of reformation at the exact point where our Ridleys and Latimers had arrived, it is to be feared, would not have accompanied those confessors so far, against the frowns of power and through the fires of persecution. They would rather have discovered arguments for transubstantiation from the unexplained phraseology of scripture, equal to those which support a Trinity, or might have referred the people to their established guides in faith and worship, proposing that inquiry, venerable for its antiquity, "have any of the rulers believed?"

R.

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## LITERARY MEMOIR OF THE LATE PROFESSOR PORSON.

Among the various arts and sciences which have during the last century been cultivated with distinguished success, and which have received important improvements, both in their theory and practice, may be numbered that of criticism. The example given in England by Bentley, was emulated in Holland by Hemsterhusius and his celebrated disciples, Valckenäer and Ruhnkenius. Nor in this island has there been wanting a succession of eminent men, who have honourably sustained the literary reputation of their country.

Among the first of these must be placed the name of the late Professor Porson, a man whose rare talents and extraordinary attainments justly made him the admiration of his age. It is unfortunate indeed, not for his own fame, which is sufficiently established, but for the interests of literature, that the merit of his labours must be estimated rather by their value than by their number. He has unhappily been cut off at a period of life, when much might still have been expected from him, at a period when the intellectual powers are usually in their full vigour, when reflection has methodized the stores of knowledge which diligence has accumulated, and time and experience have given maturity and consistency to the judgments of the mind. If it should be thought, notwithstanding this consideration, that the literary productions of Mr. Porson are still inadequate

to what might have been hoped from his talents and learning, it may not be regarded as an unreasonable supposition, that one, who from the extent of his attainments was necessarily fastidious in his estimate both of his own performances and those of others, who had in his view perfection in the art which he cultivated, and felt himself continually approaching to that point, may have been impatient of the minute labour which is often requisite in the preparation of works intended for the public view; and which by fixing the mind on objects already familiar to it, and sometimes impeding it by petty difficulties which have little relation to general principles, seems to oppose an obstacle to the constant progress which it seeks to make.

The works of Mr. Porson which have come to our knowledge, we shall briefly enumerate in chronological order.

The earliest of his productions, of which we are informed, is a criticism on Brunck's Aristophanes, which appeared in Maty's Review, for 1783. With this we are acquainted only from a reference made to it by Mr. Porson himself, in a note on the Orestes, p. 52, where an extract is given which sufficiently displays that extensive learning, and that nice feeling of the minute proprieties and customs of language, which were afterwards exercised on more important objects. Aristophanes, was we believe, one of the first authors on whom the critical study of Mr. Porson was bestowed. We have seen a copy of that poet with his marginal remarks, inserted at the age of eighteen. Whether Maty's Review possesses any other articles from his pen, we have not had the opportunity of ascertaining.

A republication of Hutchinson's edition of Xenophon's Anabasis appeared at Cambridge in 1785, to which are annexed some pages of additional notes by Mr. Porson.

With the edition of Toup's Emendations on Suidas, published at Oxford in 1790, are printed about seventy pages of notes, communicated to the editors in 1787, by Mr. Porson, whose name is thus designated in the title, A. R. P. C. S. S. T. C. S. These admirable remarks are in themselves sufficient to establish his claim to the highest rank of critical skill. They shew his characteristic clearness and decision of judgment, his wonderful power of illustration, and his peculiar mode of accomplishing his objects by the fewest and best means. The short preface is strongly descriptive of his turn of mind. In reply to an objection which might occur to the reader, that he commonly appears rather as a censor than an encomiast of his author, he observes, "Ita res erat, faciundum fuit. Neque enim hoc juvenili jactantia feci, nec quo viris me longe majoribus vellicandis laudem mihi comparare vellem, sed semper ab eorum consuetudine valde abhorrui, qui nihil aliud quam, *pulchre*, *bene*, *recte*, tertio quoque verbo ingerunt. Ego sane, nisi Toupii ingenium et doctrinam maximi facerem, numquam in eum ne hæc quidem, quantulacunque sunt, scriberem."

In 1790, appeared the celebrated letters to Archdeacon Travis, respecting the disputed, or

rather the exploded text in John's first epistle. Some of these had previously been published in the Gentleman's Magazine. It is but justice to this work to say, that it has entirely, and beyond the possibility of revival, determined the question to which it relates, and that it merits the encomium bestowed on it by Gibbon, as the finest piece of criticism which has appeared since the dissertation of Bentley on Phalaris. It will indeed be acknowledged by adequate judges, that the controversy was sufficiently decided even before the publication of Mr. Porson's work. But he placed the arguments which had previously been advanced in new and stronger lights; fortified them by additional evidence; and detected the new sophisms and artifices to which the advocates of a declining cause had resorted in their distress. These letters abound also with excellent critical remarks, incidentally introduced. They are written with much force and liveliness. The severity which prevails through them was perhaps merited by the ignorance, and more especially by the want of ingenuousness, which mark the writer against whom they are directed. This work has become scarce, and well deserves to be reprinted.

Mr. Porson is supposed to have superintended the republication of Heyne's Virgil which was undertaken by some booksellers of London, in 1793. The preface certainly bears strong marks of his style. It was however little more than an office of mere labour which in this instance he undertook. "Cum in hac editione excudenda," he observes, "ipse correctoris tantum, non editoris partes susceperim, nihil de meo addendum putavi, præter paucas quasdam virorum doctorum conjecturas, quas mihi visus est Heynius ideo præteriisse, quia nesciret." A few such observations may accordingly be found by the reader who searches for them—— "nantes in gurgite vasto."

In 1794, was printed at Glasgow, an edition of the text of Æschylus, which contains, as might be expected, many admirable emendations of that difficult and not unfrequently corrupted poet. It was not published till 1806, but in 1795 appeared at Glasgow, a very magnificent edition of Æschylus, surreptitiously and somewhat incorrectly printed from the text of Mr. Porson. From an article in the Monthly Review, which we believe that we do not err in ascribing to an intimate friend of the late Professor, and a very competent judge of the subject, it appears that Mr. Porson had made still further preparations for the publication of Æschylus than what appeared in the printed edition. "It is to be regretted," says the learned writer, "that the notes have not appeared, for we have no hesitation in avowing our decided opinion, that the corrections already published, admirable and unrivalled as they are, exhibit only an imperfect specimen of Mr. Porson's achievements in restoring the text of Æschylus." M. R. App. May, 1807.

In 1797, Mr. Porson commenced his great work, an edition of Euripides. In that year appeared the Hecuba, the Orestes succeeded in 1798, the Phœnissæ in 1799, the Medea in 1801, a se-

cond edition of the Hecuba in 1802, and a third in the course of the present year. In these editions the text is restored by the aid of MSS. and ancient copies, and in a few instances by conjectural emendation. The notes are short, and chiefly relate to the reasons on which the emendations are founded. "Nihil hic," says the editor, "exquisiti aut reconditi expectandum; tironum usibus hæc opella potissimum destinata est." It is justly observed by Herman, "eam tamen Euripidi operam navavit, quam nemo, nisi qui aut iniquus, aut harum literarum imperitus sit, summo critico non fateatur esse dignissimam."

It may be briefly remarked of these publications that they exhibit the text of Euripides in a more correct state than any in which it had previously appeared, and that the notes exhibit at once the greatest extent of erudition, and perfection of critical skill. The prefaces to the Hecuba demand a separate notice. The preface to the first edition briefly explains the object of the editor, and states and skilfully defends some metrical and grammatical canons which he had kept in view in the constitution of the text. On the completion of the work he promises some observations on the various metres employed by the dramatic poets. In 1800, an edition of the Hecuba was published at Leipsic by Godofr. Herman, in which, as has been observed, he speaks in the highest terms of the learning and critical powers of the English Professor, but attacks with some freedom some of the doctrines which he had advanced. This was perhaps the secret cause which drew forth the admirable supplement to the preface, which appeared in the second edition of the Hecuba, in which, though the name of Herman is barely and incidentally mentioned, the editor defends the doctrines which he had advanced with the utmost skill and sagacity, and so far redeems the pledge given in his former preface, as to enter on a full investigation of the Iambic, Trochaic, and Anapæstic metres employed by the dramatic poets, which are treated with a sagacity incomparably superior to any that had been before exercised on a similar subject, with the exception perhaps of Bentley's observations on the common Anapæstic verse. The reader will be amply repaid by the careful study of this fine piece of criticism. It is to the credit of Herman, that though the castigation which he received in a note on the Medea, (p. 54.) was not lenient, he has since spoken in terms of unqualified praise of the supplement to the preface.

The notes, it has been observed, are usually short. In a few instances, Mr. Porson however has appeared willing to give his readers a specimen of what it was in his power to perform, and has poured forth in profusion the treasures of his learning. We can only regret that the occasions were so few. Two editions of the plays of Euripides, published by Mr. Porson, with his notes, have appeared in Germany. The latter of them contains some valuable indexes.

To the edition of Homer published at Oxford in 1800, in four volumes 4to, is annexed a collation by Mr. Porson, of a valuable Harleian MS. of the Odyssey,

No. 5674. This collation may be regarded as a model for similar performances. The MS. had been before collated, but very imperfectly, by Thomas Bentley. It is valuable not only on account of its text, but for much information contained in the scholia, similar to that of the Venetian MSS. of the Iliad, published by Villoison, respecting the readings of the ancient Alexandrian grammarians, Aristophanes, Aristarchus, &c. Some extracts from the Scholia, are given in the course of the collation; it is much to be desired that the whole were published.

In the edition of Herodotus, published at Edinburgh 1806, Mr. Porson is said to have borne a small share.

In his latest period of study, Mr. Porson was engaged in a collation of Kuhn's Pausanias, with the Aldine edition, and some materials in that of Facius (imperfectly used by that editor) for the purpose of forming a supplement to the edition of Kuhn. That he would have thrown much incidental light on that writer, cannot be doubted by those who have observed an emendation communicated by Mr. Beloe in his Anecdotes of literature, and who have examined the additional notes in the last edition of the Hecuba. The collation of the Aldine edition was, we believe, completed.

Mr. Porson printed a few additional pages for the purpose of supplying the lacuna in the Leyden edition of Simplicius, (1640.) with a passage of considerable length, discovered in a MS. by Schweighœuser, which restores connexion to a place before miserably deficient in it. A few original observations are added. He likewise reprinted two important notes of Musgrave, omitted in Beck's edition of Euripides, with the addition of a single line of original observation.

His great work, had he lived to complete it, would probably have been the publication of the Lexicon of Photius, which exists in a single ancient copy belonging to Trinity College, Cambridge. A few modern transcripts of it, generally we believe somewhat incorrect, have found their way to different parts of Europe. The whole of this MS. which is a folio volume, was twice transcribed by Mr. Porson in the most careful and beautiful manner. Whether he had prepared any annotations, we know not; the transcript however is complete, and will not, we hope, be withheld from the world. To his familiarity with this volume, Mr. Porson has been heard to observe that he was chiefly indebted for that skill in palæography, which he so eminently possessed, and which in his employment was a most powerful instrument of criticism. He was also much occupied by a beautiful MS. of Plato, brought from Greece by Dr. Clarke, written in the early part of the tenth century. This MS. preserves various peculiarities of the Attic dialect, which are neglected in more recent copies. It confirms the emendation of a passage in the Symposium proposed by Mr. P. in a note on the Medea, p. 58, and the Scholia contain some curious literary information not elsewhere to be obtained.

Mr. Porson was at some peri-

ods of his life an occasional contributor to the Gentleman's Magazine, and Morning Chronicle.

In very few instances, it is probable, since the revival of literature, have all the circumstances requisite to the formation of an accomplished critic and scholar been so happily combined, as in that of the late Professor Porson. Sagacity, learning, and judgment were united in him in such just proportions, that it would be difficult to say which of them formed the predominant feature of his intellectual character. He was gifted by nature with a memory in the highest degree ready and tenacious. To study an author, was with him to imprint his contents, and in many instances even his words indelibly on his recollection. Yet his memory, extraordinary as it was, was subordinate to the other faculties of his mind, and does not appear in any degree to have checked their growth, or impeded their exercise. He possessed that power of determined undeviating attention, which is the fundamental principle of all considerable attainments, and to which even Newton ascribed the great philosophical discoveries by which his name is immortalized. His mode of study was, we believe, exceedingly systematic and persevering. With such an application of such talents, it is not surprizing that he gained an extent of knowledge, which it has fallen to the lot of few to possess. His judgment was not less conspicuous. His erudition is never displayed at the expense of good sense and just taste. It is always employed to illustrate, and no further than it does illustrate, the topic which he treats. A quick and just feeling of propriety, both in sentiment and expression, marks his critical decisions. He had not only judgment to appreciate, but sagacity to discover; and has, in many instances, detected errors before unsuspected, thrown light on obscurity which seemed impenetrable, and discerned relations and connexions in objects between which no common principle had been before observed. He examined subjects with that sober judgment and cautious distrust, which an ancient poet has described as the "joints of the mind," seats of its strength, and principles of its motion, and which rarely suffered a difficulty or error to escape his notice. His extent of philological learning was complete. It has been the fault of many critics, that while they have excelled in some departments of their art, they have treated others with an undue neglect, and have thence exposed themselves to errors which persons of very inferior attainments have been able with ease to correct. Mr. Porson's practice was the reverse of this. In every species of knowledge requisite for the critic he was accomplished. His attention had been closely directed to the minute delicacies of language, which are constantly preserved by good writers, but escape the notice of less accurate observers; to the peculiarities of expression or sentiment characteristic of different ages or tastes; to the various structures of verse employed by the ancient poets (in which he discovered laws before unnoticed) without a knowledge of which both learning and sagacity would be fruitlessly em-

ployed in attempting to correct their writings. To these attainments he added uncommon skill in palæography, a branch of knowledge which he applied with more success to critical purposes than perhaps any other individual. Nor was he less conversant in the literary history of the ancients, or in their manners and customs, so far as the knowledge of them tends to the illustration of their literature. The consequence of these attainments, actively employed as they always were, was an uncommon and almost unrivalled skill in the exercise of the critical art. Of this the works which he has published afford sufficient evidence; yet it is equally known to those who have witnessed his literary discourse, that they furnish but an imperfect evidence of the extent of his talents, and contain but a very small portion of those sagacious observations and discoveries with which it was in his power to have enriched the world, and which he was accustomed in conversation to impart without restraint, and with an ease and readiness from which it might seem that the attainment of them had scarcely cost him an effort.

On the whole we have to regret the loss of a most extraordinary man; one of the few who will always stand in the first ranks of the branches of science or literature which they have respectively cultivated. We have spoken of Mr. Porson only as a critic, his public and professed literary character. It may be added that there were few branches of general knowledge in which his attainments were not considerable.

D.

# MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS.

## NOTES BY DR. FRANKLIN, ON THE OPENING OF ESSEX STREET CHAPEL.

*To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.*

*Holty House, Sept.* 9, 1808.
*Near East Grinstead.*

SIR,

In addition to the letters of Dr. Franklin, published in your first Volume, I beg leave to offer you the enclosed short notes, which you may think worthy of preservation for the sake of the writer and the transaction to which they refer.

These notes were found like the letters among the papers of Mr. George Whatley, of whom my late father was one of the nephews and the executor. They are both endorsed in Mr. Whatley's hand writing,—17 *April*, 1774. *Dr. Franklin.*

Mr. W. was an intimate friend of Lord Le Despencer, who appears to have sent him the note of Dr. Franklin, not knowing that he had received one.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
ROBERT MARSH WHATLEY.

Dr. Franklin presents his respects to Lord Le Despencer *, and acquaints him, that Mr. Lindsey's Church opens this Day at 11 o'clock, in Essex House, Essex Street, Strand †; and that if his Lordship continues his intention of being there, Dr. F. will be ready to attend him.

Craven Street,
Sunday morning, 8 o'clock.

I have just sent my Lord Le Despencer Word, that the Place is Essex House, in Essex Street, Strand: the Hour Eleven.—I shall be glad to meet you there.—Thanks for the Pamphlet, &c. Your's affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

G. Whatley, Esq.

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## ANECDOTE RESPECTING DR. CLARKE.

*To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.*

*London Institution,*
*Sep.* 27, 1808.

SIR,

I have met with a book in the library here, which was once in the possession of the late Mr. Isaac Reed. It is a collection of Biographical Tracts on Emlyn and Clarke. On the first page is the following information.

This volume formerly belonged to Sollom Emlyn, Esq. Editor of the State Tryals, and author of the Memoirs of his Father. The MSS. notes are by him. See particularly the anecdote at the end of Emlyn's Memoirs of Dr. Clarke.

The MS. note to which Mr. Reed refers, is the following:

When the king went over to Hanover, having left the queen guardian of the realm, (by virtue of which authority she had power to fill up vacancies, which might happen in his absence,) he expressly gave her in charge, that in case the Archbishoprick of Canterbury should become vacant while he was abroad, she should immediately bestow it upon Dr Clarke, without writing or sending to him about it, and so as not to leave room for any applications to be made to him against it.

This I had from Arthur Onslow, Esq. Speaker of the House of Commons, who assured me he knew it to be true, and further added, that the queen thought hereby to gain the like reputation, as Q. Mary had done by preferring Dr. Tillotson. He also told me that Sir Robert Walpole strove to divert her from this purpose, and with that view was very desirous to give Dr. Clarke the mastership of the mint, hoping that would put a stop to any expectation of ecclesiastical preferment.

S. Em.

There are a few other MS. notes, chiefly consisting of dates and names. Your's,

I. O. U.

* This nobleman had been a member of the House of Commons when Sir Francis Dashwood. He is honourably mentioned by Mr. Burgh for proposing "a paragraph against undue influence to be inserted in the address" in 1745. Pol. Disquis. 1, 386. Ed.

† See "A Sermon preached at the opening of the Chapel in Essex House, Essex Street, in the Strand; on Sunday, April 17, 1774. by Theophilus Lindsey, M. A."—This temporary chapel, which had been an auction room, chiefly employed for the sale of books, was occupied for public worship, till March 29, 1778. when the present chapel was opened. See Mr. Lindsey's Sermon on that occasion. Ed.

## CHRISTIANITY A SYSTEM OF POLYTHEISM.

*To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.*

SIR, *Diss, 29th May*, 1808.

Having lately found at a friend's house, and read with much pleasure several numbers of your Repository, I determined to attempt being admitted into the number of your correspondents; my first difficulty was to discover in what manner letters should be addressed,—of other periodical publications, the covers usually supply the requisite information.

My second difficulty was to find a topic likely to interest your readers, as well as myself; for although a number of speculative questions respecting the scriptures, are continually pressing on my mind, I have observed that the doubts and solicitudes of one person are seldom those of another, and that, what to me is dark, in my neighbour's eye, shines, as if it were clear.

Christianity, I mean scriptural Christianity, is surely a system of polytheism. I do not say it teaches a plurality of supreme beings, that would be a solecism; but that it authorizes and encourages a subordinate worship of various other intelligent natures, such as angels, prophets, saints, holy spirits, glorified ghosts; and especially that it authorizes the worship, as Socinus has convincingly shown, of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Some sort of social reverence for the fathers of the country, for the prophets of religion, for the worthies of antiquity, some approach to a hero-worship, analogous to the hagiolatry of the catholics, appears to have been already usual in the temple of Jerusalem, before the time of Christ. Thus we find in the Ecclesiasticus, (xliv. 15.) that *the congregation shewed forth the praise* of famous men: and hymns follow which the people are invited to sing in honour of Enoch, of Noah, of Abraham, of Moses, and of other venerated benefactors of the people. Cenotaphs ornamented with sculpture must have been erected to these holy persons; for Herodotus, speaking of the temple of Jerusalem, says, that images of the high priests were put up within it. These images, from which the catholics traditionally borrow their saint-worship, are no where objected to in the New Testament.

On the contrary, the worship of angels to whom Paul was repeatedly indebted, (Acts, v. 19.) is expressly forbidden to be disused; and is represented as attended, like voluntary humility, with a reward, (Colossians, ii. 18); and the *elect* angels are peculiarized (1. Timothy, v. 21.) as partaking the omniscient, or all-seeing faculties of God and of Jesus Christ. Some one of these inspired and prophetic spirits was to visit the earth, and to hear what went forward on it, and to foretel future events, (John, xvi. 13.); probably in the form, or person, of Paul.

Not only Enoch, Elias, and other men, who were never suffered to see the corruption of death, are according to scripture, still living; but Moses who ap-

peared at the transfiguration, (Mark, ix. 4.) and various saints, who arose at the crucifixion, (Matthew, xxvii. 52 and 53.) must be added to the number. Surely there is no improbability, in supposing with the Catholics, that all very holy persons, from the moment of their release from purgatory, pass into the community of saints, and are within hearing of our prayers and our praise.

The apotheosis of Christ, which was revealed to the first martyr, (Acts, vii. 55 and 56.) is so repeatedly vouched by John and Paul, that I need not refer to the specific texts; and we know from Pliny, that the first Christians sang hymns to him, as to a God: so that, from the commencement of the Christian church, both Jesus, and his most conspicuous followers and allies, appear to have been honoured with some subordinate species of worship.

I remain,
Your curious reader,
CHARICLO.

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## LETTERS TO MR. (NOW BISHOP) BURGESS, ON THE TESTIMONY OF THE JEWS TO THE PERSON OF CHRIST. LETTER VII.

SIR,

The testimony of the Jews is of very little importance, when compared with that of our Saviour: and, though we have seen, that they had not the least notion of his being God or equal with God, yet it is incumbent upon us to examine, what our Lord himself has said upon this subject. The first thing, that would strike an impartial inquirer is, that our Saviour seldom gives a direct testimony of himself; and the reason is evident. He had the business to perform, which his father had given him to do, and a public and open avowal of his character would have exposed him to very great difficulties in the execution of it. We read that the people were willing at one time to set him up for a king, and the temper of the Jews was so adapted to rebellious outrage, that the least intimation on his part of a desire to sit on the throne of David, might have excited a tumult in the country, to be quelled only by military force. On this account, when Peter acknowledges him to be the Christ, the Son of God, he orders him not to divulge it abroad; for this truth was to spread itself gradually, and to be founded on conviction from the works which he had done.

We find him, however, discovering himself to those, from whom no danger could be expected. The enmity between the Jews and Samaritans was so great, that the belief of the latter would have no influence on the conduct of the former. Our Saviour made no scruple therefore of avowing himself to the Samaritans; but the utmost of their belief was; This man is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

To the man, whose sight had been miraculously restored, and who had spoken so firmly before the Jewish Sanhedrim, no harm was to be apprehended in a declaration from Christ. Our Saviour

therefore speaks plainly to him: but, if he had spoken as plainly to his disciples, when the traitor Judas was amongst them, he would have given his enemies a handle for an accusation, which they without fail would have used; it was his prudence to guard himself from their snares.

At his trial, it is said, that Jesus made a full confession of himself. I have very great doubts in my own mind on this subject: but allowing that he did, what does his confession amount to? The high priest asks him; art thou the Christ, the Son of the blessed? Pilate asks; art thou a king? Our Saviour answers, according to the common interpretation, I am. In this case it appears, that he gave testimony only to that truth, for which he came into the world; namely, that he was the Messiah, the expected king of the Jews. If the miracles which he had wrought, could not convince the Jews of the truth of his mission, we need not be surprised, that his own declaration had no effect upon them. When all the charges they could bring against him were of no avail, he was adjudged to be worthy of death, for declaring himself to be the Christ, the Son of God.

But I would ask any person, who reads attentively the history of our Saviour; is it not very extraordinary, that the priests should be so much at a loss to find an accusation against him, when modern Christians tell us, that he declared publicly to the Jews, that he was God? Would they have put him to death for pretending to be the Christ, if they had any evidence of his pretensions to so much higher a character? Is it possible therefore, that he, who till his trial never avowed himself publicly to the Jews to be the Christ, is it possible I say, that he should have given them so fair a charge against himself; and, that they, who were taking all the pains in the world to accuse him, should never hear of it? It is in the highest degree improbable; but let us hear, what foundation there is for such an opinion.

The chief grounds for this opinion I find, sir, from your discourse to be, that Jesus called God his Father, and was understood by the Jews to make himself God: that he said, I and my father are one, and No man knoweth the son, but the father, and who the father is, but the son. I have already proved, that nothing can be deduced in favour of your doctrine from the use of the term Son of God, and by parity of reasoning, I might conclude that when Christ said God was his father, he meant nothing more than in the other phrase, I am the Son of God. But lest this reasoning should not convince you, the words of Christ and the Jews may have better success.

Christ called God his father; so the Jews called God their father. We have one father, even God. Why does Christ deny, that God was their father? because says he, if God were your father, ye would love me, whom God sent. And why does he call the devil instead of God their father? because they were full of devilish lusts, and acted like children of the devil, the father of lies. Hence it is evident, that Christ called God his father, because he spoke, what he had seen with

his father: and the devil the father of the Jews, because they did, what they had seen with their father. A little attention to this mode of speaking, would have saved the world an infinity of controversy. If God was the father of Christ from generation, the devil was the father of the Jews in the same manner. If Christ meant literally, that he had seen with his own eyes (a thing impossible in itself,) God, his father, the Jews must have seen with their eyes also the devil, their father. Both suppositions are so excessively absurd, that nothing but the zeal of orthodoxy could adopt them. God is called the father of Christ, and the devil the father of the Jews, in a figurative sense, which was plain to the hearers at those times, and is to the readers of the present, whose minds are not warped by prejudice.

But it is said, that the Jews took up stones to stone him, for pretending to be God; and this in two places. Their intention does not prove, that he said any thing like it: and before we condemn our Saviour of so horrid a charge as blasphemy, let us hear his own answers. In the first place, so far from pretending to be God, he tells them, that he can do nothing of himself, and that God had sent him to do the works, which they saw. In the second place, Jesus denies entirely, that he called himself God. Hence we see, that our Saviour vindicates himself from the charges, which, if they had been just, must have been brought against him at his trial.

But he said at one time, I and my father are one. I am astonished, that a Greek scholar should bring this verse in proof of his doctrine, especially, when the term *one* is so repeatedly used by our Saviour of himself, and his disciples. I and my father are one--one what? Your knowledge in the language forbids you to repeat the nonsensical words of your church, one God. The meaning is evident. He and his father are one, exactly in the same sense, in which he prays, that he, his father, and his disciples, may be one.

I could scarce refrain from smiling at your remark on the expression, no man knoweth who the son is but the father, and who the father is, but the son—namely, that Christ must have referred to some invisible nature distinct from his human nature. For you have omitted an essential part of the verse, namely, that no man knoweth the father but the son, and those to whomsoever the son will reveal him. Now I should hardly imagine, that the nature of the son is more difficult to be apprehended than that of the father; yet Christ was to reveal the father to many. The fact is that you have confused yourself, like many other divines, with the metaphysical term, nature; to which there is no reference at all in the words of our Saviour. You should consider first the meaning of the word *know* in scripture, and this will lead you to understand, that a Christian may know and does know, in the present day, both the father and the son, without perplexing himself with investigating, what you are pleased to call the nature of either.

I am, &c.

## THE CHURCHMAN'S ANSWER TO MR. BELSHAM AND MR. ALLCHIN, &c.

*To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.*

*London,*
SIR, *29th Sept.* 1808.

As I wish to shew all possible respect to your Unitarian Correspondents, I will not suffer any of them who have written in opposition to my paper to pass without notice, although some of them seem to me to require no remark, as far as the points in discussion are concerned.

From Mr. Belsham I only learn that he is angry, as he does not condescend to defend his own opinions. Perhaps, he thinks a little seasoning necessary in the writings of a polemic; however, if he likes to feed exclusively upon seasoning, I am glad that I am not of a similar taste. To his insinuations and his declamation I make no reply; they are worthy of Andrew Fuller and William Huntington, who are masters in this kind of composition, and ready with their STRAW and their COALS to consume all opponents; and from these men, he seems to have learned something suitable to his purpose, as a writer. If every man is to be accused of Atheism, who argues for a moment upon the principles of such men as Dr. Jebb, Mr. Lindsey, Dr. Priestley and Mr. Cogan, it concerns the Unitarians, and not me, to shew that such accusation is unfounded. Being no master of polemic art, and firmly believing, that in the great concerns of religion, every virtuous man is, and must be, alike sincere, all his future hopes and fears being involved in such questions, I take no share in the censure of any man's character, on such accounts, confining myself merely to the accuracy of his reasoning, in which men may not have equal talents, though they be equally well disposed. One word on "bush fighting," which Mr. Belsham names with so much horror. I insist that nothing has been, or can be, of more pernicious influence, on subjects of reasoning or criticism, than the practice of prefixing or subjoining names to papers which involve nothing of testimony, and when a name can add nothing to the importance of any observations. The superficial reader, led away by the name, attends not to the intrinsical merit of the writer, and thus he becomes the disciple of Paul or of Apollos, instead of the follower of truth.

Dr. Priestley, in one of his works, congratulates himself upon the weight which his fame as a philosopher, gave him as a divine with the public. In this, he felt like a polemic, and not like a philosopher. An author himself, may have a strong motive for printing nothing without his name, although the practice be most injurious to truth; for looking forward to the time, when after his decease, his various productions shall be collected into immortal volumes, the fair inheritance of a happy posterity, he may be anxious that his editors should know, that all his writings are thus distinguished, in order that his

fame may not suffer, by the intermixture of the writings of others, with those which have proceeded from his pen.

With these brief remarks I make my bow to Mr. Belsham, and with feelings of benevolence and candour which he, perhaps, OUGHT TO ENVY.

I now address "A Unitarian Christian" who does not object to "bush fighting," but who rejects the whole of my metaphysics, as having nothing to do with Unitarianism. If Unitarianism be no longer to be regarded as a species of philosophy, but a question of numeration, I feel no interest in it, neither can I think it very interesting to the mathematicians of Cambridge. The Cambridge Unitarian, as Mr. Belsham had before him, states that the only question between Unitarian and other Christians, is whether God exists in one or in more than one person. Is this question, fit for the solution of a child in his third year (as it is usually stated by Unitarians,) unconnected with any thing concerning the divine character, or the fate of men, worthy of discussion? Was it for this that Priestley wasted a long and laborious life? I think not. He at least, connected with this question, many consequences, and these consequences even touched on metaphysics. Can his readers forget, that he represented his work on materialism, as containing the strongest evidence against the pre-existence of Christ? This is some proof of his disposition to connect metaphysics with theology. If nothing follow, from the admission of the dogmatism of Mahomet, or the sublime speculations of Plato on this subject, I am careless whether the men of Cambridge or of Hackney adopt the one or the other. And thus I leave the Cambridge Unitarian, in complete possession of the field.

I perceive nothing in the paper of "A rational Christian" which demands a direct reply, or which will not be sufficiently noticed, in my observations upon the reasoning of Mr. Allchin.

The remarks of "Castigator," have I hope, afforded much amusement to your readers, and if so, he has cause for satisfaction. He, kind, condescending gentleman, only steps forward to chastise those silly, strutting dialecticians, whom Mr. Belsham considers as unworthy of his prowess. That illustrious champion of the Unitarian faith, disdains to stretch forth his mighty arm, in any cause less important, than that of supporting the ladies, tottering under the stroke of such potent reasoners as William Wilberforce, Esq. the enlightened and profound member for the County of York.

Mr. Allchin has fairly met my remarks, and is entitled to the most respectful attention. If his reasoning be not convincing, it is not owing to any weakness of his hand, but that the subject is beyond human grasp. Mr. Allchin makes a little merry with me for attacking the REASONABLENESS of the Unitarian scheme, without entering upon the discussion of its truth. But, besides that I do think much of religious speculation may be true, which appears not consistent with human reasoning; Dr. Priestley, for the Unitarians, exclusively assumed the title of rational Christians or rational Dissenters, and it is but

fair, that this invitation held out to the vanity of man, (the worst of all his feelings) should be distinctly examined. This is my whole object.

Mr. Allchin thinks that without the assumption of plenary inspiration, the truth of Christianity may be reasonably established from human testimony, and alleges in vindication of this opinion, that the disciples of Jesus, must have either been enthusiasts, impostors, or faithful reporters of truth, and that IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH THEY WERE PLACED, they could not be either enthusiasts or impostors, but faithful relaters of facts. He appeals to their writings as evidence, that they were not enthusiasts; to their circumstances, that they could have no motive for imposture. His appeal to their writings is ineffectual, without proving that the writings which we have were THEIR composition, which he seems to admit is impossible to be done.

The adversary of this deduction from testimony merely human, will to this whole argument reply —that if there had never been a false religion, pretending to be revealed, established on earth, it might have been difficult to conceive of the possibility of such a thing, because no sufficient proofs might exist of the triumphs of enthusiasm or imposture. That when we are called upon to assign the motives of human action, under given circumstances, THE CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD BE CLEARLY AND DISTINCTLY KNOWN; because without this we cannot at all reason, concerning the probability of human conduct. That in the supposed case the circumstances are NOT DISTINCTLY KNOWN. Of the first propagation of Christianity, history is silent; as it is too, of the first propagation of Mahometanism. That if we appeal to the writings of Paul, the best authenticated of all the scriptural records, in the way of reason, we find that he was not an early disciple, that he was not an eye witness of the miracles or ministry of Jesus, and that his writings do afford proof that he was of a warm and violent temperament, which his frantic persecution of the more early Christians clearly evinces. If in some of his writings he preaches charity with earnestness, who, that has a party to govern, has not sought to prevent divisions? If maxims highly political and good, in the government of a party, prove that their author had not been an enthusiast, then was John Wesley always free from enthusiasm!

That it also appears that Paul was not insensible to the charms of power; for we see him at one time soliciting a commission from the high priests, and at another time governing the churches.

That we know a few general circumstances only, and those circumstances favourable to enthusiasm and imposture. Jerusalem, the capital of the empire, regarded as the seat of prophecy and miracle, by its inhabitants; its temple, the presence chamber of oracles and of God, were on the eve of destruction; convulsion agitated the whole community; and every eye solicited miracle, every ear listened for the sound of prophecy. Under such impressions and with prospects touching on the horrible obscure, what

mind could be calm, collected and at home? Could such a concussion pass away without tales of wonder and visions of revelation?

That if we turn from Jerusalem to Rome, whither this religion travelled, we see another mighty empire nodding to its fall. Contending chiefs rise in rapid succession, and agitation and misery every where prevail. The gods, who were thought the guardians of the empire, lose all the respect of the worshippers, with the fall of what they should have preserved, and the distracted minds of miserable men, were ready to imbibe any new doctrine which fed them with new hopes. All this is inviting to enthusiasm and imposture. But you say the Christian religion promised only persecution; was that an inviting tale?

The adversary will reply—that no one is persecuted before he is noticed and distinguished, and it is agreeable to the principles of human action, that men hazard the chance of suffering for the pleasure of distinction. That if the saints are told to expect persecution, they are also promised that they should "inherit the earth." That as far as any accounts have reached us of those early days of Christianity,—the preachers expected an early consummation of their wishes. That a church government was early adopted which would gratify the vanity of the leaders of this sect, and that if a common purse was made, many would find an interest in discipleship. That in all ages, although the language of the scriptures is still the same, its preachers have been men of close ambition, panting for influence and dominion. That fraud and enthusiasm often mix in the same character, and that it is probable that Mahomet and his first followers believed in his divine mission. That it must have been some time before Mahometanism appealed to the sword, and that when it did, the hazards of the soldier were probably invited by his belief of his prophet's future rewards. That Christianity was also propagated by the sword in good time, and that its splendid triumphs in the world owed too much to that fatal instrument. But how came such a self-denying religion as this, to be adopted by such numbers? The adversary will reply, that as a self-denying religion, no proof exists of its extensive adoption, that in a large community the self-denial of many must necessarily be the gain of many others, and that Middleton and others have proved, that the name indeed of Christianity was adopted in the Roman empire, but that the most impure of the ancient rites of the old religion were still retained, as branches of the new; this simple religion, in its simplicity, never having been popular.

Finally, the adversary will repeat, that the state of mind, the characters, the peculiar circumstances of individuals, which could authorize an argument, in defence of Mahometanism or Christianity, from the conduct of their first disciples, are hidden in impenetrable obscurity. Thus this celebrated argument in favour of human testimony, establishing the truth of revelation, is seen to be a baseless fabric.

To my second head Mr. Allchin opposes the hypothesis, that all the pain which is experienced, is necessary to teach men the importance of virtue. But virtue,

according to the necessarian scheme, can only be another name for pleasure, or simply the mean of pleasure. The true statement therefore of this hypothesis is, that pain is necessary, for its own destruction, or that pain is necessary to teach us to avoid it. There may be something plausible in Mr. Allchin's reasoning, if it could be proved, that the supposition of one pang which is felt, being excluded, involves a contradiction, for contradictions are not within the divine power; but I fear that he will never be able to bring men so to conceive of the subject. Besides, if all the pain that is felt were necessary to teach us virtue, what can he do with the pains which oppress the irrational animal creation? Is it capable of instruction in virtue? Perhaps that the number of men, compared with that of other sensible beings, may be in the proportion of one to a million, upon nine-tenths of which the conduct of man has no influence, the pain therefore with which this mighty mass of beings is oppressed, remains without explanation of any kind. With all proper deference to those, who are satisfied with Mr. Allchin's hypothesis, I must beg leave to dissent from them.

He replies to my observations under the third head, that as the laws of nature are merely the effects of the divine will, miracles are probable and reasonable, even upon the necessarian hypothesis. Has the divine will then, established no regular uniform laws of nature? Then no miracle is possible, if a miracle be a deviation from established laws. Has God established settled uniform laws of nature? Then any deviation from them, though it imply no impossibility, is surely improbable, if these laws of nature operate uniformly upon mind and matter, according to the original determination of the divine mind. From this simple statement, every thinking mind may easily satisfy itself.

Mr. Allchin in reply to my fourth head, states that Unitarians do not maintain that more of reformation was intended by the mission of Jesus, than what has or will be accomplished in the world. On this I have nothing to observe, but earnestly to wish that a more complete reformation may soon be effected.

Upon the fifth head, your respectable correspondent remarks, that Unitarians do not expect a resurrection from the dead, from any analogy or appearances of nature, but merely from the divine promise.

Being accustomed in my youth to read Butler's analogy with great pleasure, and still to think it a great and valuable work, I may lay too much stress perhaps on analogy and appearances, and I cannot bring my mind to think, that what contradicts all appearances, is as probable as what corresponds with them, and with the exception of Pascal I have met with few celebrated authors, who maintain that what is most unlike nature is most like God. That the Unitarians, the sons of reason, which Pascal disclaims in religion altogether, should be of this opinion is remarkable. I admit however, that the declaration of the Lord of nature, is a sufficient warrant for any expectation contrary to her appearances and laws; but I object to

the Unitarian mode of establishing that revelation which records his declarations on this head. For this I have already assigned my reasons under the first head. On the last head, of optimism, I have nothing to add, having anticipated the subject under the second.

To Mr. Allchin's sensible remarks on the difficulties which attend the schemes of Deism and Atheism I have nothing to oppose, as I am fully sensible that difficulties press upon every scheme which the mind of man can contemplate; but this admission, if universally made, completely establishes my object in this correspondence.

The Roman Catholic has his mysteries, the church of England her mysteries, the Deist his mysteries, the Atheist his mysteries, the irrational Dissenter his mysteries, and the Unitarian his mysteries, I contend for nothing beyond this. If any sect therefore, in contempt of others, have called itself rational, let it cease its arrogant pretensions, and I am satisfied.

A CHURCHMAN.

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## MIRACULOUS CONCEPTION OF THE VIRGIN MARY.

*To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.*

SIR, *October* 3, 1808.

Permit me to occupy a few lines of your very valuable and interesting miscellany, in the correction of a mistake which has crept into the "Monthly Retrospect of Public Affairs," in your last number.

The base superstition of the Spaniards in general, and the intolerance displayed by one of their provincial Juntas in requiring a subscription by all their members of their belief in the miraculous conception of the blessed Virgin, is very properly lamented and reprobated. But the author of the passage referred to, has inadvertently allowed to this same Junta much more credit than it deserves, by supposing that the required confession of faith, relates to the miraculous conception of Jesus Christ; an opinion, which whether erroneous or not, is clearly affirmed in those introductions to the gospels of Matthew and Luke, which are as yet retained in all our versions of the New Testament. Whereas the dogma selected by this public body as a test of Spanish patriotism, refers not to the conception of Jesus by his mother, but of Mary by her's. A dogma, the very existence of which may perhaps be new to most of your readers, although it has at various times excited bitter contentions in the Romish church, and particularly among the Spanish adherents to that communion. In proof of which, I need only quote the following passage from Mosheim. "Vetus Dominicanorum et Franciscanorum rixa Utrum sine vitio et labe Mater Jesu Christi concepta sit, necne? (quorum hoc Dominicanis placet, alter Franciscanis) multum negotii et molestiæ Paulo v. Gregorio xv. et Alexandro vii. exhibuit. Cœpit ea non diu

post initium sæculi xvii. Hispaniam haud leviter affligere, et in partes distrahere. Quocirca Hispaniarum reges Philippus iii. et iv. legationibus aliquot Romam missis, Pontifico ad eam decreto publico terminandam gravissime sollicitabant. Verum in prudentiæ magis quam tanti ponderis precibus, obtemperandum esse judicabant. Nam ex alterâ parte splendor majestatis Hispanicæ, quæ in Franciscanam sententiam propendebat, ab alterâ Dominicanæ familiæ dignitas et auctoritas terrebat." In this dilemma therefore the Pope only decreed, that the opinion of the Franciscans was probable, and ought not to be publicly opposed by the Dominicans; while the Franciscans in their turn, were forbidden to charge the Dominicans with error on account of their disbelief. This compromise however was only temporary; for as usual, the most absurd opinion in the end gained the victory, which was confirmed in the year 1708, when Pope Clement XI. decreed an annual festival in commemoration of the miraculous conception of the blessed Virgin to be celebrated throughout the whole Romish church. A. N.

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## MR. MARSOM'S DEFENCE OF THE PRE-EXISTENCE OF CHRIST, IN REPLY TO MR. BELSHAM. LETTER III.

*To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.*

*London,*
*August* 12, 1808.

SIR,

I proceed in proof of the pre-existence of Jesus Christ, to John vi. 62. "What and if ye shall see the son of man ascend up where he was before?"

On this text, Mr. Belsham says*, "To ascend up where he was before, in the connexion in which it stands, signifies to ascend up into heaven." This concession necessarily involves in it the fact that he had been in heaven, and had come down from thence. How then is the conclusion so naturally arising out of this interpretation of our Lord's words, in favour of his pre-existence, to be got rid of? Why, says Mr. Belsham, "This phrase, as Beza, Raphelius, Doddridge and many others have well observed, signifies to be instructed in the mind and will of God, to search into divine truth."

Will Mr. Belsham seriously contend that the meaning of our Lord's address to his hearers in this passage is†, "Do ye revolt at this? What then if ye shall see the son of man *instructed in the mind and will of God*, as he had been before? Or *searching into divine truth*, as he had done before?" What could our Lord mean by their *seeing* him so instructed? or by their *seeing* him search into divine truth? What further evidence did he mean to give them of his divine knowledge, than that which he had already given them by his discourses and miracles? Did our Lord acquire

* M. Repos. Vol. ii. p. 546. † Improved Version of the New Testament.

his knowledge of the divine counsels and will by laborious study and investigation; or by the spirit which was given to him without measure? Is it possible then to believe this to be the meaning of our Lord's words?

The manner in which our Lord expresses himself in this passage, evidently supposes, *the ascension of the son of man* (whatever is meant by it) to be future. Mr. Belsham says it means "to be instructed in the mind and will of God, to search into divine truth." Did our Lord then by this expression, (as this interpretation necessarily implies) intend to inform the Jews, that he was not *then* so instructed; that he was not *then* acquainted with divine truth; but that he should acquire that knowledge at some future period?

For this meaning of the phrase, "To ascend up into heaven," Mr. Belsham however appeals to "Beza, Raphelius, Doddridge, and many others." It is not denied that they may have given that sense of the phrase in chap. iii. 13. and why? Obviously to get rid of the difficulty which attaches to the common supposition, that those are the words of Jesus Christ, which I have endeavoured to refute in a former Letter: That difficulty appears to have induced them to suppose, that in that *single* passage the phrase must have an unusual and figurative meaning. But have they given that meaning to the phrase in the passage under consideration, or in any other where it occurs? The reader would naturally suppose they had, by Mr. Belsham referring to their interpretation of the phrase on this verse. But this is not the case, at least with respect to Doddridge, (whom only I have had an opportunity of consulting,) who understands the phrase here of a literal ascent into heaven: his words are, "[What] then if ye shall see the son of man ascend up into heaven, where he was before? would you then understand what was meant by the bread of life coming down from thence, as the food of the world? Or would you then believe, that I came down from heaven, notwithstanding the objection you have made as to the meanness of my parentage?" And in a note he says, "What Christ here says of his ascension, may be further intended to intimate the necessity of taking the discourse in a figurative sense, as it would so soon be evidently impossible to eat his *flesh, which was to be received into heaven.*"

If the interpretation of the phrase, in chap. iii. 13. given by those learned expositors, is to be referred to, as the meaning of the phrase wherever it occurs, (and unless it is, the reference to it by Mr. Belsham here is impertinent, and proves nothing as to the meaning of the phrase, "*Ascend up where he was before,*") then every plain passage that relates to the local ascension of Jesus Christ will be mere figurative language, and the fact that he is gone into heaven and set down on the right hand of God will be entirely subverted. Apply their interpretation of the phrase to our Lord's words to Mary, chap. xx. 17. as Mr. Belsham has done to his words, chap. vi. 62. (and there is as much propriety in doing so in the one case as in the other,) and

the meaning of the words will be, "Touch me not, for I am not yet instructed in the mind and will of God, I have not yet searched into divine truth; but go and say to my brethren I shall be instructed in the mind and will of God, I shall search into divine truth."

But does Mr. Belsham rest the whole proof of the phrase "Ascend up where he was before" being figurative, upon the interpretation those writers have given of a different phrase in chap. iii. 13.? No, he alleges it must be figurative, because as he says*, "The *whole* of the discourse is highly figurative." His words are, "This then appears to me to be the true meaning of our Lord's *enigmatical* discourse; and in the connexion in which the 62nd verse is introduced it admits of a sense perfectly consistent with our Lord's proper humanity: though when considered as a detached sentence, the words *seem to imply* a pre-existent state in heaven. But the *whole discourse is highly figurative;* and if any argue from our Lord's expressions in it, that he *literally descended from heaven*, they ought, like the Jews to interpret literally the *precept* to eat his flesh and drink his blood." That is, if a discourse contain any thing in it that is figurative, we must conclude the *whole* to be so; a position which if true, would render every discourse and all language mysterious and unintelligible; for what discourse or what conversation is there in which there is not an intermixture of figurative and literal expression?—But let us examine the fact whether "the *whole*" of this discourse be "highly figurative? Our Lord says, v. 38. I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." Is there any thing "*enigmatical*" in this? Is the *whole* of it figurative? Was the mission of Jesus enigmatical? Did he not literally do the will of his father? Is there any thing *enigmatical* in the phrase "I came down from heaven?" Why then should that phrase be supposed to be figurative, if what is immediately connected with it be literal? Mr. Belsham might, to be sure, explain the words, "I, that is, my doctrine, came down from heaven, not to do its own will, but the will of him that sent it." Or† "I am come down from heaven, i. e. I am invested with a divine commission," not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. Is the phrase, "I will raise him up at the last day," which frequently occurs in this discourse, to be understood figuratively? Let the reader consult the discourse itself, particularly, v. 39, 40, 44, 45, 46, 47, &c. and draw his own conclusion, respecting the truth of the assertion.

Mr. Belsham says, that our Lord did not vouchsafe to correct the error of the Jews, "but* proceeds to tell them that *he*, meaning his *doctrine*, was the true bread from heaven, v. 35;" yet in direct contradiction to his own explanation of the pronoun, he immediately adds, "The Jews being still at a loss to understand his meaning, v. 41. our Lord, without waiting to explain himself, *goes on to assure them that*

* M. Repos. Vol. ii. p. 547.

† Improved Version.

*his* PERSON was the living bread." Are then the doctrine and person of Jesus Christ the same thing?—Mr. Belsham then finds out another meaning of the figurative expression under consideration, not at all consistent with that he had before given; his words are *, "Does this offend you? What if you should see the son of man ascend up where he was before: q. d. What if I should *disclose to you truths still more remote from your apprehension, and more offensive to your prejudices!*" He had before said that the phrase signifies, "*To be instructed in the mind and will of God, to search into divine truth.*" These explanations are very different in their meaning; both therefore cannot be true; which of them then does Mr. Belsham mean to abide by? "It is too much, (to use his own language †,) for him to insist upon having both strings to his bow."

It would be natural to ask, what analogy is there between the supposed figurative language of the text, and the explanation given of it by Mr. Belsham? Can the words, "Ascend up where he was before," by any fair construction, by any sound criticism be made to mean, "Instructed in the mind and will of God," or "to search into divine truth?" Do they naturally or necessarily suggest any such idea? Is such an interpretation of them warranted by any thing contained in the sacred writings? Certainly not. From whence then could such an interpretation have arisen, but from a strong prejudice in favour of a system, to the support of which it was necessary, first to suppose the words to be figurative, and then to affix a meaning to them which should be favourable to that system?

A very able critic, and I believe, equally an opposer of the pre-existence of Jesus Christ with Mr. Belsham, the Rev. Mr. Simpson, of Bath, gives this passage a very different meaning from that which I have been examining. He supposes an ellipsis at the end of the 62nd verse, and gives the following rendering of the words ‡, "Doth this offend you? Nevertheless, when ye shall see the son of man rise up where he was before, ye will know that *he* is the spirit that giveth life. The flesh profiteth nothing, &c." And he understands the words, not with Mr. Belsham as meaning an ascension up into heaven in a figurative sense, but literally of a rising *up* from the dead.

But much as I approve of the translation of Mr. Simpson in general, and of the manner in which he has filled up the ellipsis in the end of the 62nd verse, yet I think that he has not given the true rendering of the word αναβαινω, which cannot properly be rendered "to rise up," and that the phrase here made use of is extremely unnatural as applied to a resurrection from the dead, in reference to which the word αναβαινω, I believe is never used, and especially as connected with the words, "Where he was before." The word properly signifies *to ascend*, or *go up*. This I believe will hardly be disputed; nor will any one of the authorities referred to by Mr. Simpson justify his rendering.

* M. Repos. Vol. ii. p. 547. † p. 548. ‡ Essays, p. 439.

Supposing then the true rendering of the words to be (as I contend it is) "Ascend up where he was before," I cannot imagine that our Lord or any man would make use of such a phrase to describe a mere restoration to life. Could our Lord mean by this mode of expression to convey the idea that when he returned to life he should "*ascend up*" upon his feet, and stand upon the ground "where he had stood" before he was put to death? Or could he mean to say, that "returning to life he should ascend up" out of the tomb (which probably was not below the surface of the earth) upon the earth "where he was before?" Such an interpretation of the words, appears to me, altogether arbitrary, unsupported by any evidence, and almost an insult on common sense.

Dr. Priestley has given a meaning to the passage equally remote both from Mr. Belsham's and Mr. Simpson's. His words are*, "Are you offended, that I should speak of myself under the character of bread to be eaten by you, when I mean my doctrine, which is to be received and digested for your spiritual nourishment? That I have spoken of myself as *sent down from heaven*, as was the manna on which the Israelites subsisted in the wilderness? You may perhaps see more truth in this representation than you now imagine, when you shall see me *actually* and *really go up into heaven*, from whence I have now spoken of myself as *having descended*, in a figurative sense only."

It is curious to observe how these learned expositors, (each of them with the manifest view of weakening and setting aside the evidence contained in this passage for the doctrine of the pre-existence of Jesus Christ) contradict themselves and each other; one of them affirming that, "To ascend up where he was before," means first, "*to be instructed in the mind and will of God*," "to *search into divine truth*," then that it means, "To *disclose* truths still more remote from their apprehension;" another that it means "*to rise from the dead*;" and a third, that it means, "*actually* and *really to go up into heaven, where he* was before, from whence he had spoken of himself as having descended *in a figurative sense only*." But if, as the doctor says, αναβαινω means *actually* and *really* to go up into heaven, is there any ambiguity in the following words, "Where he was before?" Do they not plainly and clearly mean, without a figure, that he had descended from heaven?

Such is the consequence, when men, departing from the obvious meaning of scripture, bewilder themselves and others with metaphorical and fanciful explanations, unnatural in themselves, incapable of proof, and utterly unintelligible. Only affirm a plain expression to be figurative, and it may be made to mean any thing but what it really means.

Mr. Belsham and Dr. Priestley tell us that by "the *bread of life*" Jesus means his *doctrine;* but by what authority? He says that he means *himself*. They tell us that *eating that bread*, and *eating him*, mean *believing his doctrine*. He himself explains what he means, v. 35. "Jesus said unto them,

* Harmony of the Gospels, p. 101.

I am the bread of life: he that *cometh to me* shall never hunger; and he that *believeth* ON ME shall never thirst." *Coming to him*, and *believing on him* here, do not mean *believing his doctrine;* but his Messiahship, that is, that he was the Christ. This was the *primary* object of faith, and this faith was not to be produced by his doctrine, but by his miracles, the great evidences of his Messiahship. "Ye seek me," says Jesus Christ, v. 26. "not because ye saw the miracles," and were convinced of my divine mission, "but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled." "He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God;" whereas the *doctrine* of Christ is a *secondary* object of faith, arising out of the former and necessarily dependant upon it.

I maintain then that, whether Jesus Christ speaks of himself, in this discourse, under the metaphor of bread, or without a metaphor, he speaks not of his doctrine but of his person, (and this Mr. Belsham has admitted;) and that when he says the son of man was in heaven before, had come down from heaven, and should ascend up into heaven, he speaks of his person literally, and does therein most plainly and unequivocally teach the doctrine of his pre-existence.

But before I dismiss the passage I will give what I conceive to be the meaning of our Lord, adopting the rendering of Mr. Simpson, substituting only "*ascend up*," for "*rise up*." "Nevertheless, when ye shall see the son of man ascend up where he was before," i. e. when they should perceive that he was so ascended by the out-pouring of the holy spirit which was shortly to take place, by which event alone they could be assured of it; for the unbelieving Jews, to whom our Lord was speaking, neither saw him rise from the dead, nor ascend into heaven, and the descent of the holy spirit is the argument which Peter makes use of to establish that fact, see Acts, ii. 33. "When ye perceive by that astonishing event that the son of man has ascended up where he was before, ye will know, that HE is the spirit that giveth life. The flesh profiteth nothing." He had before told them that he was the bread of life and that his flesh which he gave (or was about to give) for the life of the world was truly food, and his blood truly drink; probably referring in these expressions to his sufferings and death: but this, independent of his future glorification, would profit nothing with respect to their being raised to immortality at the last day, of which he had been speaking. "He is the spirit that giveth life." "The last Adam, says the apostle *, was made a quickening spirit." And again, "The Lord is that spirit." Therefore he says again †, "Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth, know we him no more." He was made "a quickening spirit," not by his death, but by the power which he afterwards received to quicken the dead and raise them to eternal life. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life," i. e. they relate to that

* 1 Cor. xv. 45. † 2 Cor. v. 16.

quickening power which I shall receive, and to that eternal life which I shall have to bestow. And thus Peter seems to have understood our Lord, for immediately after he had heard him deliver this discourse, he exclaims, v. 68, "Thou hast the words of eternal life." Comp. chap. viii. 28.

This appears to me to be the most obvious and natural meaning of the words, but it is time to proceed to some further proofs of the doctrine for which I contend.

The next passage I shall produce is that contained in the xvi. John, 28. "I came forth from the father, and am come into the world: *again*, I leave the world, and go to the father." The clauses of this verse are exact counterparts to each other; they cannot therefore be one of them figurative and the other literal, but must both of them be either literal or figurative. And that they are counterparts to each other the word, *again*, which imports a proper return, sufficiently shews. Now it is contended that the latter of these clauses is strictly literal, i. e. that when Jesus Christ left the world he did locally ascend up into heaven. "He was, says Mark*, received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God." Luke says †, that "While he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven." And in the Acts it is said ‡, "While they (the disciples) looked stedfastly towards heaven, as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which said also, ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." There can be no doubt then, that when he left the world he really and literally ascended up into heaven. If then "his *going to the father*," means that he went up into heaven, the opposition in the text requires that his coming *forth from the father*, in the former clause, should be understood of his real descent from heaven. This will, I conceive inevitably follow, unless we are to sacrifice the analogy of language, and its plainest and most obvious meaning at the shrine of system.

In the "Improved Version" is the following note on the passage; "I came forth from the father, q. d. I was sent by him as his messenger to mankind." Very true; but does it from thence follow that he was not sent from heaven? He himself repeatedly says that he came down from heaven.

On a similar passage, John xiii. 3. "Jesus knowing that the father had given all things into his hands, and that he was *come from God*, and *went to God*," is the following note ‖. "He came from God as his messenger to the world. See ch. i. 6. he was going to God *to give an account of his charge*; his public mission and ministry being closed." By what authority is it said, that "He was going to God to give an account of his charge?" Have the scriptures said any thing of the kind? Has Jesus any where said,

* Chap. xvi. 19. † Chap. xxiv. 51. ‡ Chap. i. 10, 11. ‖ Improved Version.

that that was the end for which he went to God, or have his apostles given any such intimation? Whence then did the writer of this note get the information? The question is, did he when he went to God, go up into heaven? If he did, that will determine the meaning of the other expression, "He was come from God."—Nor is there the least pertinence in the reference to John i. 6. Had it been indeed said in that passage, "There was a man sent from God, and he came into the world," there would have been some plausibility in it; but even then, it would not have set aside the plain meaning of these passages which is determinately fixed, I conceive by the words, "And went to God," and "*Again*, I leave the world and go to the father."

I consider these passages then, as clear and direct proofs of the pre-existence of Jesus Christ. Reserving, with your permission, the further examination of Mr. Belsham's arguments to a future communication,

I am, your's, &c.

JOHN MARSOM.

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## THE INQUIRER. NO. V.

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1. *Jewish Antiquities.*—2. *Divine Unity.*—3. *Genealogy of Jesus as given by Matthew.*—4. *Biblical Query.*—5. *The History of Jesus.*—6. *The "Old Whig."*—7. *Life of Rev. H. Taylor.*

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*To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.*

### 1. *Jewish Antiquities.*

SIR,

By giving the following Queries an early insertion in your valuable Miscellany, with the hope of exciting the attention of some of your learned correspondents and receiving satisfactory answers from them, you will much oblige,

Your's, &c.

A CONSTANT READER.

Q. 1. Exclusive of any evidence arising from the Evangelic history, what day of the week was the first of the month Nisan in the year in which our Lord was crucified?

Q. 2. Does it not appear from the Old Testament, that a day of holy convocation among the Jews was observed as a sabbath?

Q. 3. If a day of holy convocation was observed as a Sabbath, how can it be accounted for, that at the instigation of the Jews, Jesus should be crucified on the first day of unleavened bread, which was a holy convocation?

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### 2. *The Divine Unity.*

SIR, *Sept. 16th*, 1808.

If throughout the Old Testament, the unity of the Supreme Being is constantly maintained (as it most undoubtedly is) how comes it that, in the New Testament, this same unity is not so unequivocally preserved, as to preclude the various opinions that are formed upon this subject, and which of course render those who admit either the doctrine of the Trinity, or the divinity of Jesus Christ, liable to the guilt of idolatry? If the New Testament has rendered dark and obscure, what was before clear and unquestionable, what advantage do we derive from

it? Any of your intelligent correspondents having the goodness to reply satisfactorily to those Queries, will greatly Oblige, your's, &c.

LAICUS.

### 3. *Genealogy of Jesus as given by Matthew.*

Those, who have objected to Matthew's Genealogy as being at irreconcileable variance with that of Luke, have grounded their objection to it chiefly on this circumstance, that the father of Joseph is by Matthew called *Jacob*, whereas by Luke he is called *Heli*. But is not this Genealogy liable to a much stronger objection, namely, that in Luke (iii. 27.) we read that Salathiel (or, Shealtiel) was the son of *Neri*; while Matthew tells us that he was the son of *Jechonias*, in direct contradiction to the declaration of God by Jeremiah (xxii. 30.) that this man, Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, should be written "childless?" In a few words,—if it will not be allowed that the Genealogy in Luke is needless, yet is it not manifest that this of Matthew is altogether inadmissible?

### 4. *Biblical Query.*

What is the proper meaning of Prov. xiv. 24. latter part. "The foolishness of fools is folly?" A Sermon upon this text, was published, perhaps thirty years ago; but the Inquirer cannot call to mind the name of its author.

### 5. *The History of Jesus.*

A correspondent wishes to be informed whether "The History of Jesus, taking the gospel of Mark as the text, and inserting the necessary additions from the other Evangelists" (as suggested by the author of the Queries given in the Monthly Repository for last December, p. 644.) would probably be acceptable and useful? T.

### 6. *The "Old Whig."*

If any reader of the Monthly Repository is in possession of a copy of "The Old Whig," which formerly belonged to the late Rev. M. Townsend, who died a few years ago at Bath; it is requested, that he will examine it to see whether there are (as it is supposed there are) any written notes in it which may discover what papers in that work were contributed by the late Rev. Dr. Chandler, and will give such notes to the public by means of the Monthly Repository.

T.

### 7. *Life of Rev. Henry Taylor.*

J. E. wishes to know whether there be any detailed biographical account of the Rev. Henry Taylor, Rector of Crawley, and Vicar of Portsmouth, in Hants, and author of Ben Mordacai's Apology, and other valuable publications? As a son of Mr. Taylor's, a clergyman, is living, perhaps he might be induced, if there be not, as is supposed, any memoir of his truly excellent father, to lay one before the religious public, through the medium of the *Monthly Repository*.

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## APOSTOLIC LANGUAGE AND MODERN ORTHODOX LANGUAGE COMPARED.

### *To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.*

*Palgrave,*

SIR, *April* 10, 1808.

Whether the following observations, which are not new, may be suitable to your publication is left to your judgment. I presume to think them of some importance, and deserving of serious perusal. Their purpose is to recommend to Christians to reflect, "whether the language which they *use* and *hear* on religious topics would have been adopted by the first preachers of the religion of Christ." I was led to think on this subject by a

conversation which I held lately with a well-disposed person of orthodox sentiments. After quoting this text, 1 Tim. ii. 5, "There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," I observed, "you would not, probably, have expressed yourself thus. Would you not have said, *The God-man* Christ Jesus?" He ingenuously answered, "I believe I should."

On the subject of many Christian doctrines it would be found, on inquiry, that the language of modern and ancient Christians would be equally different.

I. Let it be supposed that the Jews, pricked to the heart by the declaration of Peter that "God had made that same Jesus, whom they had crucified, both Lord and Christ," in their astonishment and agony, had put, to ministers of the present day, who assume the respectable name of gospel or evangelical ministers, the question which they so solemnly asked the apostles. Let us imagine them asking, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" What resource have we in so tremendous a situation? The question has been asked, if we may believe the "Diaries, Minutes," &c. laid before the public by the description of persons to whom I am supposing the application to be made. What would be the answer? What, in fact, have been the answers returned? And what is the answer of Peter? "Repent, and be baptised every one of you in [into] the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Acts ii. 38. I will venture to say that modern answers would not have been returned by Peter, and for this reason, because he really returned none such. And I will venture to say, that Peter's answer would not be given by our popular ministers, and for this reason, because they invariably return very different ones, if they give a true account of themselves. No case can be stronger than that of the Jews, become deeply conscious that they had, by wicked hands, crucified the Lord of Glory. None could more require an adequate and sufficient remedy. It is recommended seriously, to ministers especially, and, under such awful circumstances, to ask themselves, "What would Peter have said on such and such an occasion, and what has he said on a similar one?" It is recommended, also, to Christian people, to ask themselves "Would the Apostle Peter have spoken thus to me in my situation? Did he speak thus to the Jews, self-convicted of having put to death the Son of God?"

II. It will be acknowledged, by all serious and reflecting men, that the right worship of Almighty God is a most important concern, whether the *object* or *acts* of worship be considered. On this head, let ministers and people examine well the language which they use, and solemnly reflect on that used by the founders of Christianity. Would they adopt the words of Christ, John iv. 22, 23? Where he says, "*We* know what we worship. The hour cometh (and now is,) when the *true* worshippers shall worship *the father*—the *true* worshippers shall worship him in spirit and in truth." It is presumed that few would hazard such

language as this with persons asking information on the subject of the worship of God. Why will not men ask themselves, "are our language and that of Christ in perfect accordance?"

III. All men must allow that *eternal life* is the great consideration which renders religion and the present life important. To obtain eternal life is of all things most desirable. But what language do men hold respecting a subject of such awful moment? Can they freely say with Christ, John xvii, 3? "And *this is eternal life*, that they might know thee, (the father,) the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Do they not pronounce as impious those who acknowledge the father *as the only true God*, and Jesus Christ as the sent of God? Do they ever represent this knowledge *as eternal life?* Let them seriously ask, "What do we say, and what hath Christ said on this subject in an address to his father, before whom all reserve was unnecessary?"

IV. How seldom shall we find a man who knows that the New Testament contains such a text as that in 1 Cor. viii. 6. "Unto us there is but one God, *the father*. How many ministers have allowed this passage to escape from their lips? Let me ask you, fellow Christians, if you have at any time heard it quoted in the pulpit? If such concealment is practised, surely the people have cause to complain. But concealment is not all that deserves reprehension. The majority of Christian writers, treating such a subject, would probably utter words directly opposite to those of the apostle, if there be opposition between the sentiments of Unitarians and Trinitarians. Their language would doubtless, be, "Unto us there is but one God, the father, son, and holy ghost." Why do they not compare their words with those of the primitive authors, the apostles of Christ? At a future time I may call the attention of your readers to some other texts of the scriptures which are never brought forward for the consideration of Christian people by those who are esteemed *faithful* ministers of Jesus Christ.

V. When any part of the New Testament has been explained to our hands by the apostles, and especially by Jesus Christ, we ought to accept it with all thankfulness, and to adopt it with all readiness of mind. Of this description is the passage contained in John, x. 30. "I and my father are one." It is surprising that these words of Christ could have created any dispute, after they have been so pointedly interpreted by himself in opposition to the construction put upon them by the Jews, the very same with that adopted by the majority of modern Christians. They understood Christ as asserting his deity in them. "Thou being a man, makest thyself God," say they. And so say Christians in general. Our Lord did not immediately apprehend the cause of their displeasure, and asks if they stoned him for a good work. When they had explained their sense of his words, he proceeds without delay to justify them, and to correct the misconception of his countrymen. This he effected in two

ways. 1st. By shewing that stronger language had been used of the prophets in the Jewish scriptures. In those scriptures, "which cannot be broken, they to whom the word of God came were called *Gods*" says he, which term *he* had not used. 2ndly. By explaining his own meaning in a far different sense from that entertained of his words by the Jews. He clearly declares that his words amounted to an assertion only that he was "the son of God." The argument altogether amounts to this. "If the prophets were called by the exalted name of *Gods*, why is your anger kindled against me for using a far less assuming appellation? that of *son of God*, which is the true interpretation of the words, *I and my father are one.*" Let any man who can, prove that this is not the genuine purport of this part of the scriptures.

How much should we value such passages, the true meaning of which is explained by the author of our salvation? Who will be bold enough to dispute the comment of Jesus Christ? It is decided by the highest authority that the words, "I and my father are one," mean exactly, "I am the son of God." To say that they mean that Christ is God is to repeat the contradicted and perverse comment of the Jews, who ever persecuted him, and perverted his words. Compare, Christians, your words with those of the divine oracles, your comments with those of the Jews and the son of God.

That the attention of the Christian world may be drawn to an attentive study of the scriptures, a consummation devoutly to be wished, is the humble prayer of your's, PRIMITIVUS.

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## MR. KENTISH ON THE DEATH OF THE REV. JOHN EDWARDS.

*To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.*

*Birmingham,*
SIR, *October* 6, 1808.

In consequence of the manner in which the death of the Rev. John Edwards, is noticed in your last number, I think proper to state the simple fact, as I receive it on the authority of a very respectable correspondent at Exeter, and after a careful examination of his circumstantial narrative of the event:—*Mr. Edwards lost his life, while he was bathing.* That this view of the case is correct, I have the strongest persuasion which presumptive evidence can give.

Hoping that I shall soon be able to furnish you with materials for drawing a short sketch of my predecessor's public life, and for making a tolerably just estimate of his talents, virtues and principles, I remain, Sir,

Your obedient servant,
JOHN KENTISH.

# BIBLICAL CRITICISM.

## MR. HOWE, ON THE JUDGMENT OF THE WORLD BY JESUS CHRIST.

*To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.*

*Bridport,*
*March 3,* 1808.

SIR,

The doctrine of a general resurrection from the dead and impartial judgment, when every one will be treated according to his real character, though beyond the powers of the unassisted human intellect to discover, is when revealed, consonant with reason, and satisfactorily accounts for many of the dispensations of providence in the present state, which would otherwise be involved in clouds and darkness. Christianity teaches us, that we are now in the infancy of the first stage of existence, and "a great unbounded prospect lies before us." We can at present indeed discern but a little part of that grand and infinitely wise and benevolent scheme of government, which the succession of ages in infinity, will be gradually unfolding.

With respect to a future judgment, whether the process of it will be conducted immediately by God himself, or through the medium of a person appointed and duly qualified by him, for this important office, must be determined by the same divine revelation, which teaches the doctrine of final retribution. On this point it is declared, that God will judge the world by Jesus Christ. Some Christians have supposed, that though this may refer to the final distribution of rewards and punishments, nothing more is meant by it, than that the Deity will judge mankind, according to the principles of the gospel. My attention however was peculiarly attracted by a novel opinion maintained on this subject, by a writer in your Monthly Repository, for January, 1808, whose signature is P. K. He conceives that the judgment of the world by Jesus Christ, signifies merely the successful spread of the principles of the gospel, (if I do not mistake his meaning); that "it commenced at the time, when our Lord's commission to our world was fully established, and the Christian doctrine was first revealed to man," and has no reference whatever, to the final day of accounts. Without undertaking to determine the precise sense of John, v. 22, 23, and John, xvi. 8. I propose to quote a few passages which I think plainly and unequivocally refer to a future judgment by Jesus Christ. "John v. 28, 29. The hour is coming when all that are in their graves, shall hear his voice, the voice of the son of man, and come forth, they that have done good to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation or punishment." Can this refer merely to the spread of Christian principles, or to any transaction in the present scene of things. "Matthew, xvi. 27. The

son of man shall come in the glory of his father with his angels, and then he shall reward every man according to his works." "Acts, xvii. 30, 31. God now commandeth all men every where to repent, because he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." P. K. refering to this passage, says, "it doth not positively and clearly contradict his hypothesis, for the phrase 'will judge' in the 31st. verse, is expressed in those Greek terms which always serve to mark a transaction that is likely to take place immediately, or soon after its prediction or annunciation." This however does not militate against the apostle's referring to the final judgment, for the period of its commencement was not communicated to our Lord himself when he was upon earth, and Paul seemed to think that this solemn transaction would take place within a few years, though not immediately, as I conclude from comparing together some passages of his epistles. Acts x. 42. Peter in his address to Cornelius and his friends, says "he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it was he, which was ordained of God, to be the judge of the living and the dead," The apostle Paul in the 2nd. chap. of his epistle to the Romans, speaking of the rewards of the just and the punishments of the wicked, refers them to "the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel." 2 Cor. v. 10. "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

These and various other passages of the same import, evidently refer to the final day of accounts, and overturn the hypothesis of P. K. that the judgment of the world by Jesus Christ, means no more than the operation of the principles of the gospel, in the present state. The second coming of our Lord, to raise the dead, to judge the human race, and to confer on the sincerely virtuous, that "eternal life which is the gift of God by Jesus Christ," is a scene to which the apostles often direct the views of Christians, as a powerful motive for animation in duty and soothing consolation and cheering hope in affliction, especially under persecutions in the cause of Christianity.

P. K. says, "the absolute supremacy, perfection, and all-sufficiency of Jehovah, forbid the necessity of his having a deputy or associate, to judge the world, in the last day, according to the common ideas of that transaction." This objection would be answerable on the supposition, that our Lord has any power or authority, underived from and independent of his father, or that God is not able to judge the world, without the concurrence of Christ. P. K. however candidly admits that this is not the sentiment of those, whose opinion he combats; for he says, "the advocates for the common hypothesis of the last judgment allow, that the mediatorial agency of Jesus Christ at that season, must be consistent

with and subordinate to the supreme agency and judgment of his heavenly father." Why then should "the absolute supremacy, perfection, and all-sufficiency of Jehovah forbid" it, since the former, on this supposition, is consistent with and subordinate to the latter! Our Lord when upon earth declared, "I can do nothing of myself, the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." It is I think the prerogative of God to work miracles; to change instantaneously the established course of nature; it requires infinite power to effect it; yet when this divine operation has attended the prayer, the word or volition of *any man*, many instances of which we read of in the sacred history, it is ascribed to *him*, and he may be called the *deputy* of God.

"To Jesus, the Father gave the spirit without measure," and was always with him, by his supernatural influence, to produce the miracle which our Lord wished to be performed, and thought the occasion required, for the relief of human distress, and the confirmation of his divine mission. For instance, when he cried with a loud voice to his beloved friend at Bethany, who was lying in the tomb a senseless and inactive corpse, "Lazarus come forth," the supernatural power of his heavenly father, was immediately exerted in restoring life to him; but Jesus is said to have raised him, because God vivified the dead body, at his word. This view of miraculous operations, removes the objection, which some entertain to the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, and final judgment by Jesus Christ, as exceeding the powers of any creature however exalted, to effect. For in the same sense in which Almighty God raised Lazarus from the grave by our Saviour, i. e. at his word or volition, it may be said, that he will restore all mankind to life, and exercise judgment on them by Jesus Christ, at the last day. And how would it be any infringement of "the supremacy, perfection, and all-sufficiency of the Father," in the latter case more than in the former! This view of the subject reconciles 1 Cor. vi. 14. with 2 Cor. iv. 14. "God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power." "Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you." We are so little acquainted with the nature of this solemn transaction, of the future judgment and state of retribution, that there may be abundant reasons of wisdom and propriety, for ought we can determine to the contrary, in the appointment of Jesus Christ to a personal and distinguished part, in conducting this awful process, as a reward of his unparalleled piety and benevolence.

To some of your readers, who have not Dr. Priestley's Notes on the Scriptures, it may be gratifying to see the last sentiments of that celebrated philosopher, learned divine, and pious Christian, on this interesting and important subject. They are contained in his note on "Matthew, xxv. 31. When the son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory."

"In the discourse that I am going to read to you, Jesus gives a more particular account of the final day of judgment, one of those great events, of which he had given a general intimation before; but of the time of which he acknowledged, that he was ignorant. Nothing in all the scriptures, from the nature of the subject, is so interesting and awful as this. It is impossible to peruse it, if we give due attention to it, without emotion; being an account of the proceedings of that great day, from its reference to which every thing else in life derives its importance, and delivered by the person, who is appointed by God to preside in it. Something figurative must be allowed in this account, but at the same time, if we may depend upon the account of the apostle Paul, who had it by revelation from our Saviour, it must be in general, literally true; at least there is no appearance of figure in his account. In order to comfort the Thessalonians with respect to their deceased friends, he says, that "they who are alive at the coming of Christ," should have no advantage, over those who died before that event; but that on the appearance of their Saviour, "the dead in Christ," as they are called, should rise first, and that then they who shall be found alive, shall be changed, and joining those who will then be raised from the dead, "shall meet the Lord in the air, and so shall be for ever with him." In what manner the proceedings of this great day will be conducted, we cannot tell; but probably without any distinct or formal examination of every individual person, which indeed is not intimated in this account. Perhaps by some means unknown to us at present, every person's real character will be at once conspicuous, so that the sentence of the Judge will strike all with the fullest conviction." Priestley's Notes on all the Books of Scripture. Vol. iii. Sect. 76

That your valuable Repository may be extensively useful, in promoting the cause of liberal inquiry, religious truth, Christian candour and rational piety, is the sincere wish of,

Sir, your's respectfully,
THOMAS HOWE.

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# MONTHLY RETROSPECT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS;

OR,

## *The Christian's Survey of the Political World.*

WITHIN the last hundred years, the blood of Englishmen flowed in Spain, for the sake of opposing the establishment of a Bourbon on its throne. All Spain is now in arms, with a vigour inconceivable, and an enthusiasm without bounds in the cause of a Bourbon: and the English court has acknowledged the Bourbon dynasty, and will defend it to the utmost. Such is the state of human politics, of which brutal force is the arbiter. Thousands upon thousands will be slain in this contest. But the contest is not now merely about a name, whether a Napoleon or a Bourbon should reign: but whether Spain should be an independent nation, and be governed by its own laws, and by a sovereign, unshackled by foreign restraint, but under just subjection to the laws of the realm.

In this cause England is engaged with ardour. Is it for love of freedom, virtue, and independence, or merely through hate and fear of the common enemy? Spain is now become the enemy of Buonaparte: let us not seek too narrowly into motives; England is become its friend. The nations warring with each other profess to be Christians: and yet by brutal force are attempting to settle a question, which with reasonable and Christian-like minds would scarcely admit a moment's discussion. What horrors, what bloodshed will not be the consequence! Whosoever sheds man's blood, his blood will be shed, was a primitive law: what a dreadful responsibility then rests upon those, on whom ultimately depends the death of myriads of human beings!

In this contest, it is easy to see that a very heavy responsibility rests upon one party. What deceit, what violence has not attended every step taken by the great warrior of Europe, and how can any part of his conduct be reconciled with either reason or justice. The abdication, or resignation, or deprivation of Charles might be allowed to be just; but how does it appear, that his lawful successor, supposing the previous steps to be just, which we do not aver by any means to have been lawful, how does it appear that his lawful successor was justly put aside? The act of renunciation was done out of the kingdom; and as it appears by the Memoirs of Cavellos, to have been made not voluntarily but under the impression of restraint.

A strange doctrine has been maintained relative to kings and to kingly government, unsupported either by reason or revelation: but in the height of its absurdity, it could never equal the act of Buonaparte, which supposes that a foreign sovereign may convoke a certain number of the inhabitants of an independent kingdom, and out of their country and the inspection of their fellow citizens, and under the eye of a potent sovereign, they are to form laws for their country, and change the succession to the throne Richly, as the house of Bourbon may have deserved every thing that has befallen it, yet a nation could not easily bear such an insult. Nothing but brutal force could tame the mind to such abject submission: and the resistance made by the Spaniards to the wayward caprice of the great conqueror, may lead to events, which neither he nor his opponents have thought of.

Providence has raised an obscure man, of an obscure family, of an obscure district, of an obscure subjugated country, to throw down dominations and powers, boasting of their antiquity. But how have those powers conducted themselves? Did they not conceive themselves to have some absolute right in themselves to reign, and little think, that their high situation was an awful trust, of which they were to render an account? The success of a great conqueror is no argument of his own excellence. Nebuchadnezzar was raised to execute the just judgments of God, but was at last levelled with the beasts of the field, and became an outcast from men. Whatever great designs man may be contriving in his heart, he is the mere instrument in a grand chain of events, and his wicked actions may be the just avengers of the crimes committed by others. Man proposes, but God disposes: with the aid of this maxim, we may survey the awful scenes around us with complete resignation: and however dark the cloud may now be, a bright day will follow, and the stone cut out of the mountain without hands will destroy the mighty idol of the destroyer of the earth.

The grand Junta for the administration of the affairs of the kingdom of Spain has been assembled: it is now sitting, and on its resolves and conduct depends much of the future happiness of the kingdom. Their meeting commenced with solemn vows, and protestations, and appeals to the abominations in their temples, those idols of wood and stone, which are permitted to disgrace their places of worship, and before which they bow down with the awful reverence, due to God alone. We must lament these errors in a brave nation: but this is the established religion of their country, and no authority had been recognised to make an alteration in their forms. Ferdinand was acknowledged in their oaths to be the lawful king, and of course this assembly is released from the trouble, which would have attended a discussion on the person of the first magistrate. We have not heard what steps have been taken by this Junta with respect either to the means of defending the kingdom, or its future regulations. The first point will evidently be security from the attacks of the external foe, and the next to establish the meeting of a free Cortez. Without the latter nothing can be done, and happily so many Juntas are established in different provinces, that their jurisdictions cannot be set aside, nor properly ascertained, but by the Cortez.

As to the external enemy, our accounts are very uncertain. The French papers would make us believe, that immense armies are marching over the Pyrennees. It is certain that Bilbao is in their possession. They have retaken it from the Spaniards: but with very little loss on the part of the latter. It is supposed however, that they cannot long retain possession of this important post. In the mean time troops are

marching from the south of Spain, and something decisive is daily expected. However the Spaniards will be too prudent to risk a general engagement. We have landed on the shores of Biscay, the troops which we rescued from Denmark, and these, joined with a great body of troops in the province, will be capable of repelling the French from that quarter. Every one views with astonishment the conduct of England, during this important crisis. Had they sent their whole army into Biscay, it must have secured the independence of the province, and created such a diversion on the rear of the enemy as to have very much disconcerted all his measures; and if a judicious attack had been made from Catalonia on the other side, and the southern troops in the front, the French might have been compelled to cross the Pyrennees before they could have received reinforcements. In this way much blood might have been saved. Every thing now wears the appearance of a terrible conflict.

The English army has been lying inactive in Portugal. Its commander-in-chief is come to England, and his arrival was preceded some time by that of Sir Arthur Wellesley, the negociator of that strange convention, which has astonished all mankind. The extraordinary part of that convention is, that the French army in Portugal, which could not co-operate at all with the forces of Buonaparte in Spain, has been conveyed to France, and rendered useful to him, whilst the English troops in Portugal are cooped up in a place, where they cannot act at all for the common cause. But many melancholy circumstances have attended this business, which must have given great disgust to our allies. We profess to deliver them from French tyranny, and the French have been sent out of Portugal: but the proclamations of our English generals savour more those of a conqueror in the midst of a conquered country, than of friendly troops that have rescued their allies from tyranny. To what this cause, this strange conduct is to be attributed, will doubtless be matter of future inquiry: but the whole business bears at present a very strange aspect, and stands in great need of explanation.

Portugal is rescued from the French. It seems that by secret articles between the French emperor and the late king of Spain, this country was to have been partitioned out by them in a manner agreeable to their respective interests. The world has witnessed the partition of Poland by three great monarchs: this intended partition rested upon a similar foundation of equal injustice; but it is melancholy to see, that Buonaparte has a precedent for his conduct in the actions of regular governments, and that no difficulty was made by the cabinet of Spain, when the plunder of its neighbour was to be the fruit of a coalition with a mighty conqueror. When will the nations of the earth learn justice!

Whilst Spaniards and Portuguese are in the utmost agitation for their independence, the emperor of France, who might have been expected to head his troops in an attack on Spain, is on a sudden known to be in the heart of Germany. There a rendezvous has taken place between him and the emperor of Russia. Kings and princes, and nobles of Russia, Germany, and France are witnesses of this interview: and when the mighty men of the earth are assembled together in this manner, some gigantic effort, some Titanian project is likely to be the consequence. What has been the subject of the imperial conferences, time must discover. As Russia sent its barbarous hordes into the heart of Europe under the cruel Suwarrow, the plan now may be, to destroy by its ignorant slaves the rising hopes of liberty in Spain. Or an old project may be revived, and Austria may enter into the plan of driving the Turks out of Europe. The sovereigns, who are forming their projects, are heads of destroying armies. The one is mighty in wars and force is his argument: the other was born to rule over slaves, and boast of his will being the law in an extensive empire. What good can be expected for mankind from the councils of two such men. But there is a God, who ruleth the earth, and who can bring their councils to nought, or make them tend to useful purposes, which it was not in their imaginations to conceive, or in their hearts to desire.

The war continues between Sweden and Russia, but is confined on land to Finland: and on the sea the Russian fleet is shut up in the port Baltic, in which it had taken refuge, and where the combined fleets of Sweden and England are unable to annoy it. No

*Mr. John Home.*

effort, we may be assured, was lost on the part of the assailants to complete their victory: but the situation of the port has rendered every one ineffectual. Negociations, it has been said, have been attempted on our part with Russia; but surely it cannot be expected, that its emperor should lend us a willing ear, when he has taken so long a journey to join in stronger bands of amity with our enemy.

Domestic occurrences have given rise to much reflection. The indignation at the convention in Portugal was universal, and it was to be expected, that it would find vent not only in the remarks of diurnal and periodical publications, but through those constituted bodies, which so happily for the king and kingdom are established in this country. These are the meetings of common councils, common halls, and meetings of counties, cities, and boroughs. The common council of London set the example. An address was unanimously voted to the king to condole with his majesty on the disgrace that had attended the expedition to Portugal, disappointing the hopes and expectations of the whole nation in so strange a manner, and to request, that an inquiry might be set on foot to discover the causes of this disgrace, and to punish the authors of it. The address was couched in the most loyal terms, and was read with general approbation throughout the whole kingdom. The king's reply excited universal surprize. It contained a reprimand of the city of London for its interference, stating, that recent occurrences might have convinced them of a readiness to institute inquiries on all occasions, in which the character of this country or the honour of its arms is concerned.

The reply naturally brought to recollection the Helder, Ferrol, Constantinople, and Egypt: and besides, how could the city of London imagine, that administration would set on foot such an inquiry, when they had ordered the park and tower guns to be fired on the account of the convention, and no public proof had been given, that its authors had met with disapprobation. What was more remarkable in the visit of the Lord Mayor and his brethren to court was, that at the moment they received this rebuke, Sir Arthur Wellesley made his appearance, and was most graciously received. The language, thus used in reply to the city of London, was little calculated to stop the constituted bodies of England from coming forward upon this occasion: and meetings were advertised from several counties and towns, and similar addresses have been voted. The city of London has many precedents in its favour of addressing the throne, when affairs of much less magnitude and importance called for its interference; and, when the sovereign acquiesced with cheerfulness in its wishes. But they have done their duty; and in this the constitution of our country is admirably formed, that the wishes of his subjects may be known to the first magistrate in a regular and orderly manner, whilst in other countries all access to the throne is prohibited; the sovereign lives in ignorance of his people's thoughts; and whilst discontent is smothered, and evils are not corrected, truths are at last made known, when the crown is no longer a safeguard to the unfortunate and ill-advised monarch.

# OBITUARY.

September 4, at Merchieston Bank, in Scotland, aged 86, Mr. JOHN HOME, author of the Tragedy of Douglas, who was lately pronounced by a female critic (Mrs. Inchbald,) "the only living author of a living tragedy." Mr. Home was educated at Edinburgh, and fortunately for him could number among his contemporaries at College some of the men who were afterwards destined to carry English literature to its highest pitch of refinement, and amongst others Dr. Robertson, the historian: with several of these he united in the formation of a society, where their object was to cultivate the study of elocution, and to prepare themselves by the habits of extemporary discussion

*Mr. John Home.*

and debate, for conducting the business of popular assemblies. Having finished his studies, Mr. Home was admitted into the church of Scotland, as a minister, and presented to the living of Athelstonford, in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh. Here he cultivated the acquaintance of the literati of the metropolis of the North; and in the year 1754, made one of the *Select Society*, an institution intended partly for philosophical improvement, and partly for the improvement of the members in public speaking, and projected by Mr. Allan Ramsay, the painter. This society attracted so much of the public notice, that in the following year the number of members exceeded a hundred, including all the individuals in Edinburgh and the neighbourhood who were most distinguished by genius or by literary attainments. In the list of Mr. Home's associates in the *Select Society*, besides Mr. Ramsay, we find the names Dr. Robertson, Mr. David Hume, Dr. Adam Smith, Mr. Wedderburn, (afterwards Lord Chancellor,) Lord Kames, and Sir Gilbert Elliot. The Society subsisted in vigour six or seven years; and to the friendships he cultivated here, Mr. Home, probably, owed the powerful support which he experienced when he was soon after assailed by religious fanaticism.——In the year 1757, Mr. Home published the Tragedy of Douglas, which kindled a flame among the Scottish clergy. The extraordinary merits of this performance, which is now become to Scotchmen a subject of national pride, were not sufficient to atone for so bold a departure from the austerity expected in a Presbyterian divine, and the offence was not a little exasperated by the conduct of some of Mr. Home's brethren, who partly from curiosity and partly from a friendly wish to share in the censure bestowed on the author, were led to witness the first representation of the piece on the Edinburgh stage. Ecclesiastical proceedings were instituted against him; and notwithstanding the able and animated exertions, and the persuasive eloquence of his friends, and particularly Dr. Robertson, in the assembly of the church of Scotland, he was stripped of his benefice and excommunicated. This bitter persecution of the author of a tragedy, which is as unexceptionable in its tendency as it is beautiful in its fable and composition, which contains "no line when dying he could wish to blot," powerfully attracted the public sympathy. Patrick Lord Elibank, a lively and accomplished nobleman, henceforwards adopted Mr. Home, as an intimate companion; and his present Majesty, then Prince of Wales, bestowed on him a pension, which he enjoyed to the end of life.——The tragedy of Douglas has been extolled by the poet Gray, as a work that "retrieved the true language of the stage, lost for three hundred years;" yet it was refused by Mr. Garrick, when offered for the English stage, on account of its simplicity of fable, incident and poetry: exquisite simplicity! on which has been founded its best claim to longevity. When however, after having long passed its ordeal at the theatre of Edinburgh, it was brought upon the London stage, the public reversed the judgment of the English Roscius, and it has ever since been a favourite and popular performance. The moral taste of an English audience which had approved the tragedies of a Divine of their own country, Dr. Young, could not be offended with the more elegant dramatic production of a Presbyterian minister.—Mr. Home lived from the time of his publishing Douglas to his death in studious retirement; and his admirers will naturally lament that in that long interval he brought forth nothing for the public entertainment or instruction.

*Mrs. Sarah Potter.*

Died on the 11th of September, 1808, in the 28th year of her age, Mrs. SARAH POTTER, wife of Mr Joseph Potter, of Cuckfield, to whom she had been married about one year and four months. She had had one child, which died when it was little more than two months old. Previous to her lying-in, she caught a severe cold, which at last terminated in a consumption that defied all the power of medicine. Mrs. Potter had been a member of the Unitarian General Baptist Church at Ditchling, eleven years, and was much esteemed for her seriousness and piety. From the time that she was first taken ill to her death, was a whole year; during which she set an admirable example of Christian patience. For a long time she entertained hopes of recovery, but at length she became sensible of her situation. When she mentioned to her friends that she was in pain, she would say, "I hope I don't murmer." A fort-

night before her death, she told the writer of this article, that she had no hopes of living; and added, "I believe God is good, and he knows what is best." He paid his tribute of funeral respect to her in a sermon which he delivered at her interment on Monday the 19th, at Ditchling Meeting-house. The text, which was chosen by herself, was Isaiah xlv. 22. "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God and there is none else." The congregation was numerous and serious; and as the deceased was well known, many persons were much affected. Though dead she yet speaketh.

A. B.

September 12, at her seat at Lee, in Kent, GERTRUDE BRAND, BARONESS DACRE, relict of Thomas Brand, Esq. of the Hoo, in Hertfordshire, who died in February, 1794. Her Ladyship was the daughter of Sir S. Fludyer, a wealthy and eminent citizen, who died January 18, 1768. Early in life (1773,) she had married Trevor Charles Roper, Esq. who on the death of his uncle, Lord Dacre, (1786) inherited his title. Her affection for her second husband was most extraordinary; and her sorrow for his loss almost overwhelmed her mind. For a considerable period after that event she wholly secluded herself, and when she appeared again abroad, she wore the hat and the walking cane of her deceased husband. A habit of the colour of his cloaths, and formed after the fashion of them about the waistcoat, was assumed by her ladyship immediately after her mourning weeds. The boots, spurs, and gloves of Lord Dacre, were placed every morning in the hall, by the servant who had attended him in his life time. A portrait of his lordship hung in the dining parlour, and a plate, with a knife and fork, was placed at table as if for him. His monument which is of marble, and very beautifully executed, stands beside that of Sir S. Fludyer's, in Lee church-yard, and was cleaned with care every Saturday, and strewed round with sea sand. Thither her ladyship came every evening at about nine o'clock, and knelt about ten minutes; nothing could deter her from these orisions; and although she was twice robbed, yet would she not permit any of her servants to attend her even at a distance. On neither of these occasions did she seem anxious to punish the plunderers, but when a villain wantonly mutilated the monument of her husband, she prosecuted him with very great severity. The period of the year in which Lord Dacre expired, was always held sacred by her, and because the meadows were then being mowed, and his Lordship, the day previous to his death, had sat at the window to observe the hay-makers, the meadows were every year afterwards mowed on the same day; the chair in which his lordship sat was placed by the side of the window, and as she placed herself beside it, she seemed to converse with the spirit of her departed spouse. In all this there was no derangement of intellect: in most things a strong masculine perception and extensive prudence were the characteristics of her ladyship. She was benevolent to the poor, but economically so; and though not sparing of her beneficence, she knew the great secret of doing much good at a small expense. She walked about the village of Lee in all weathers, frequently entered the cottage of the sick, chatted with the aged, and encouraged the industrious. The respect and affection for her memory, which was shewn at her funeral on Tuesday the 20th of September, was very great: the church-yard and the lanes leading thereto, were crowded by numbers of all ranks, and the poor bewailed their loss with tears and lamentations. Her ladyship's age was no more than 54, but her appearance and her masculine attire, made her to be thought full ten years older. She was rather short and bulky in her person. Her features were small and pleasing, but being embrowned by her manner of living, possessed a forbidden harshness to a casual observer. Condescension, cheerfulness, and benevolence, were indeed soon perceived by those who conversed with her, and she seemed to take an interest in the affairs of others, that endeared her to many.—She is succeeded by her eldest son the Hon. Thomas Brand, M. P. for Hertfordshire, who will go up to the House of Peers, under the title of Baron Dacre. Both his private character and public conduct are pledges for his political purity.

September, at his seat, Forthampton Court, Gloucestershire, in his 78th year, the Hon. and Right Rev. JAMES YORKE, L. L. D. Lord Bishop of

*Right Rev. James Yorke, L. L. D.*

Ely, Governor of Addenbrook's Hospital, and Visitor of Jesus, St. John's, and Peter's Colleges, Cambridge. He was the son of the first Lord Chancellor, Philip Yorke, sometimes called the great Lord Hardwicke; a man of Dover, who from the lowest beginnings, raised himself by his talents and fortune, to the highest post in his profession, accumulated an immense fortune and spread the roots of his family among those of the highest trees in this realm; and brother to the Right Hon Charles Yorke, who accepted the Seals, it is said reluctantly, on the resignation of Lord Camden, in 1770, but died suddenly three days after he had become Lord Chancellor, and while the patent for his peerage was making out, under the title of Baron Morden. The Bishop was of course uncle to the present Earl of Hardwicke, and the Hon. Charles Yorke, M. P. for the County of Cambridge.

Dr. Yorke married the daughter of Dr. Maddox, bishop of Worcester, who was another instance of a man rising by his talents from very low beginnings. Maddox had been brought up as a pastry-cook, and from raising pastry was raised to be a head of the church. But he had too much good sense to be ashamed of his origin; and a pleasant anecdote is told of his recommending one day at his table, some pastry to his guests, "though," said he, with a significant look, "they are not of my own making."

To his family interests, rather than to his talents or learning, Dr. Yorke owed his promotion in the church. He never we believe appeared before the public as an author, or in the House of Lords as a speaker. He was successively appointed to the deanery of Lincoln, and the bishopries of St. David's, Gloucester and Ely, which last he held twenty-seven years. He succeeded Dr. Moss in the see of St. David's, in 1774; on the death of Dr. Warburton, in 1779, he was translated to Gloucester; and he was removed to Ely in 1781, on the death of Dr. Keene.

One action alone will secure lasting reputation to Bishop Yorke. In 1789, the mastership of Jesus College, Cambridge, which is in the gift of the Bishop of Ely, became vacant by Dr. Beadon's becoming Bishop of Gloucester. Bishop Yorke immediately offered it to Archdeacon Paley, to whom he seems to have been unknown, without any solicitation, and in consideration solely of his merits. This honourable patronage induced Paley to dedicate his "Evidences" to the Bishop. "The circumstances," says the dedicator, "under which this offer was made, demand a public acknowledgment. I had never seen your lordship; I possessed no connexion which could possibly recommend me to your favour; I was known to you only by my endeavours, in common with many others, to discharge my duty as a tutor in the University; and by some very imperfect, but certainly well intended, and as you thought, useful publications since." Notwithstanding Paley's sense of his lordship's conduct, whose notice he declares to be "the most flattering distinction of his life," he declined, for what reasons does not appear, the mastership of Jesus College. The year before, Mr. Frend, of that college, had endeavoured to procure the abolition of the subscription to the articles required of candidates for the degree of Batchelor of Arts. Dr. Beadon, then master, had taken upon him to displace Mr. Frend from his office of tutor. Mr. Frend appealed to the Bishop of Ely, the visitor of the college; and the Bishop thought proper to confirm the master's sentence. Possibly Paley might think if he became the head of the college, he must enter into this dispute; and he had been the tutor of Mr. Frend, and was known to be not very dissimilar to him in religious sentiments. It would have been to the Bishop's honour if he had acted as liberally towards the pupil as the tutor. But his conduct towards Mr. Frend was as dishonourable as that to Dr. Paley was honourable, he having confirmed first the removal of that gentleman from his tutorship, and next his banishment from his college.

His lordship has left behind him a widow and numerous relatives and descendants. He is succeeded in the see of Ely, by Dr. Thomas Dampier, bishop of Rochester.

*Mrs. Catherine Allibone.*

Sunday, October 9, died at Chatham, Mrs. CATHERINE ALLIBONE. She had attained somewhat beyond that period when the human strength is at *best* "*but labour and sorrow.*" For some years she painfully suffered from an asthmatic complaint and ultimately fell a victim to its force.--The grand distinguishing feature in her character, was a tender sus-

*Professor Porson.*

ceptibility of and sympathy *for* "others woe," which she ever felt a disposition to relieve, often regreting that her scanty means prevented the exercise of a pleasing benevolence to its utmost extent. As a wife, while an opportunity was afforded for discharging the duties of that relation, she conducted herself with prudence and fidelity.—But for maternal fondness if she *has* ever been equalled, it is *impossible* she should be *exceeded*. A surviving son and only child, considers it his duty to make this grateful acknowledgment to her memory, while he entreats the candid reader's permission to indulge in the following apostrophe to departed worth, as expressive of the undissembled feelings of his heart.

Long as life's power maintains its seat,
Affection shall thy name repeat,
For none *on earth* more dear can be,
Than thou my mother wast to me.

T. C. A.

Sept. 25th. PROFESSOR PORSON, at the house of the London Institution, aged 48.

Richard Porson was born at East Ruston, in Norfolk, on Christmas-day, 1759. His father was the parish-clerk, who himself, without the advantages of early education, laid the basis of his son's unparalleled acquirements. From the earliest dawn of intellect, Mr. Porson began the task of fixing the attention of his children, three sons and a daughter, and he had taught Richard, his eldest son, all the common rules of arithmetic, without the use of a book or slate, pen or pencil, up to the cube-root, before he was nine years of age. By this early habit he acquired such a talent of close and intense thinking, and such a power of arranging every operation that occupied his thoughts, as in process of time to render the most difficult problems, which to others required the assistance of written figures, easy to his retentive memory. He was initiated in letters by a process equally efficacious. His father taught him to read and write at the same time. He drew the form of the letter either with chalk on a board, or with the finger in sand; and Richard was made at once to understand and imitate the impression. As soon as he could speak he could trace the letters; and this exercise delighting his fancy, an ardour of imitating whatever was put before him was excited to such a degree, that the walls of the house were covered with characters which attracted notice, from their neatness and fidelity of delineation.

At nine years of age he was sent to the village school kept by a Mr. Summers, who professed nothing beyond English, writing and arithmetic,—but he was a good accountant and an excellent writing-master, and perfected his pupil in that delightful talent of writing, in which he so peculiarly excelled. He continued under Mr. Summers for three years; and every evening during that time he had to repeat by heart to his father, the lessons and tasks of the day, thus the process of recollection was cherished and strengthened so as to become a quality of his mind.

The Rev. Mr. Hewitt hearing of his extraordinary propensity to study, kindly instructed him and his brother in the classics. The progress of both was great, but that of Richard was most extraordinary. When he had reached his fourteenth year, his attainments had reached the notice of all the gentlemen in the vicinity. Among others he was mentioned as a prodigy to the late Mr. Norris, an opulent and liberal man, who sent him to Eton in 1774. Here he displayed such a superiority of intellect and such extensive acquirements, that the upper boys took him into their society. In their frolics as well as in their serious tasks, Porson was the constant adviser and support. On this lively part of his youth, he used to dwell with peculiar complacency.

He suffered a great loss by the death of Mr. Norris. He was however continued at Eton through the kindness of some eminent and liberal persons. In 1777, he was entered of Trinity College, and his character having gone before him, he was from the first regarded as a youth whose extraordinary endowments would keep up and extend the reputation of that society, nor did he disappoint the hopes which he had excited. He first applied to mathematics, in which from his early exercises he was so well calculated to shine, and then by the prospect of a scholarship sat down to the classics. He got the medal of course, and was elected a Fellow in 1781. In 1785, he took his degree of Master of Arts, but before the period had elapsed when he must either enter into orders or resign his fellowship, he determined to

decline subscription. His fellowship thus ceasing, in 1791, he was left destitute. Some private friends however stept in, and soon after he was unanimously elected Greek Professor at Cambridge This distinction was grateful to him though the salary is but 40l. a year. He now turned his thoughts to publication and continued to reside in London, where in 1795, he married a widow lady who died of a decline in the course of two years. In 1805, soon after the establishment of the London Institution, he was appointed principal librarian and occupied apartments in the house till his death. On Monday evening the 19th September, he suffered an apoplectic stroke while in the street, from which he recovered only to endure a second attack the next day. He languished till the Sunday night and expired without a struggle. His body after being opened for the satisfaction of his friends, was conveyed to Cambridge, where it was interred in the Chapel of his College, in a grave at the foot of the statue of Sir Isaac Newton, after a funeral procession according to the most respectful forms of the University, the Bishop of Bristol, Master of the College officiating upon the occasion. Among other funeral honours, several *epigraphs* in Greek and English verse, were placed upon his pall.

Such is the account of this extraordinary scholar which to the extent of our limits, we have extracted almost verbatim from the Morning Chronicle, where it is well known to have been inserted upon the best authority. We are there informed that Mr. Porson in early life, suffered from disorders which made great inroads on his constitution. There is also an attempt, no doubt dictated by affection, but certainly a vain attempt, to disguise those lamentable habits of intemperance, into which the Professor had unhappily fallen for many years, and which are too notorious to be disputed while "de mortuis nil nisi verum" shall be regarded as a just sentiment. These habits must have prevented his lectures at Cambridge, had there been no other impediment. They also rendered his connexion with the London Institution, otherwise so honourable to that establishment, a measure of doubtful precedence. Nor can the literary world sufficiently regret the noble objects which such a mind might have attained, had his self-command been such as many scholars have discovered. There is a portrait of the late Professor in the possession of his friend Dr. Raine. His library, enriched by his notes, it is expected will be purchased by his College. For an account of his publications and his literary character we refer to a Memoir in the former part of the present number, for which we are indebted to a friend whose own attainments have well qualified him to appreciate those of the learned Professor. R. C.

# INTELLIGENCE.

## BAPTISM OF A JEW; BY THE REV. JOHN EVANS.

"Mr. ISAAC LITTLETER, a Jew, was baptized by the Rev. John Evans, at Worship-street, October 2,—his mind was fixed in the acknowledgement of the MESSIAH, by the perusal of Mr. Evan's Sermon on *the Fulness of Time*, preached at the opening of the General Baptist meeting-house, Cranbrook, in May last. The Address on his Baptism, with an introductory account of his conversion, has been printed and published. He is a convert to UNITARIAN, (not *Trinitarian*) Christianity."

## MR. DAVY'S NEW DISCOVERY IN CHEMISTRY.

In a former number, p. 167, we gave an account of Mr. Davy's important discovery, and of a premium being adjudged to him by the National Institute of Paris. We have now the pleasure of inserting the following articles,—one from a paper circulated in the Royal Institution, the other from the New York public Journals, from which it appears that it is proposed to pursue the discovery in this country, and that it is also pursuing in France, under the patronage of the emperor.

*New York.*—Several notices have appeared in the American newspapers of the late discoveries in chemistry by Professor Davy, of the Royal Institution in London.—Those who are interested in such subjects, and who are anxious to learn the decision of philosophers on the

correctness of Mr. Davy's experiments, will be gratified by the perusal of the following extract of a letter, just received by Professor Silliman, of this town, from a gentleman in Paris, from which it appears that these discoveries, so important to physical science, are confirmed by the first chemists of France.

"I lately received a letter from Sir Charles Blagden, of London, in which he gives an account of an important chemical discovery, which Mr. Davy has recently made. This indefatigable professor has, by means of Volta's galvanic pile, discovered the basis of pot-ash and soda.

"The French chemists with eagerness caught this intelligence, repeated the necessary experiments, and found a result similar to that of Mr. Davy.—The discovery of this new link in the chain of physical science, was for some time the principal topic of conversation among the Savans of Paris. The interest it excited reached even the palace, and the Emperor ordered M. Guy Lussac, one of the most persevering and distinguished experimental chemists of France, to go over the process of Mr. Davy, in his presence The success was so satisfactory to his majesty, that he, in order to encourage the chemists in experiments of this nature, caused a new and more enlarged galvanic apparatus to be purchased for their use, at the public expence.—But this apparatus is now found to be unnecessary.

"Messrs. Thinard and Guy Lussac have been able, after torturing these substances in a variety of ways, to decompose them without the aid of galvanism. The decomposition is effected by combining these alkalies with carbon and iron, by means of a very high temperature. From a combination of carbon and pot-ash or soda, results a black mass, which suddenly inflames when put in contact with the air, or plunged in water.

"These two chemists have already submitted these metals to a number of interesting experiments, the result of which will soon be made public. Much is expected from their constant and well directed labours, and indeed it is generally believed here, that this discovery will gradually lead to others of equal or perhaps superior importance. As the metals of pot-ash and soda can be easily procured, at least for all kinds of experiments, the relations which they sustain to other substances will form a new and useful subject for chemical investigation.

"It is Mr. Davy's opinion that the different earths consists of bases of a peculiar metallic nature, having a very strong affinity for oxygen, by uniting with which they form those earths respectively.—He believes that he has already made visible, by the assistance of the galvanism, the base of the one called *barytes*."

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## ROYAL INSTITUTION.

A new path of discovery having been opened in the agencies of the Electrical Battery of Volta, which promises to lead to the greatest improvements in chemistry and natural philosophy, and the useful arts connected with them; and the increase of the size of the apparatus being necessary for pursuing it to its full extent, it is proposed to raise a fund by subscription, for constructing a powerful battery, worthy of a national establishment, and capable of promoting the great objects of science.

Already in other countries public and ample means have been provided for pursuing these investigations. They have had their origin in this country; and it would be dishonourable to a nation so great, so powerful, and so rich, if from the want of pecuniary recourses, they should be completed abroad.

An appeal to enlightened individuals on this subject can scarcely be made in vain. It is proposed, that the instrument and apparatus be erected in the Laboratory of the Royal Institution, where it shall be employed for the advancement of this new department of science.

The above paper having been laid before the board of managers of the Royal Institution, they feel it their indispensable duty instantly to communicate the same to every member of the Royal Institution, lest the slightest delay might furnish an opportunity to other countries for accomplishing this great work, which originated in the brilliant discoveries recently made at the Royal Institution.

*25th. July*, 1808.

## A COMPLETE LIST OF NEW PUBLICATIONS ON MORALS AND THEOLOGY IN OCTOBER, 1808.

The Conversion of God's Ancient People the Jews. An Address delivered at Worship Street, October 2, 1808, upon the Baptism by Immersion of Mr. Isaac Littleter, one of the Israelitish Nation, on his Profession of Christianity, to which is prefixed an Account of his Conversion by John Evans, A. M. 1s Symonds.

A Comparative View of the Plans of Education, as detailed in the publications of Dr. Bell and Mr. Lancaster. By Joseph Fox. 1s. 6d.

Advice to Young Ladies on the Improvement of the Mind, and Conduct in Life. By Thomas Broadhurst. 8vo. 4s. 6d.

Divine and Moral Precepts, for the Conduct of a Christian towards God and Man. By John Hamond; supposed to have been the Father of the celebrated and learned Dr. Henry Hamond. Written for the instruction of his grandson. Published by the Rev. John Plumtree, Prebendary of Worcester. 3s. 6d.

The Works of Creation: a Series of Discourses for Boyle's Lectures. No. 1, being the first sermon of the Series delivered at St. Mary le Bow Church, Cheapside, on Monday, Sept. 5, 1808. By Edward Repton, A. M. of Magdalen College, Oxford. 1s. 6d.

Hints respecting the Education of the Poor. By a Clergyman. 1s.

The Connexion of Words with Objects; a Visit to the Deaf and Dumb; with Hints towards a Classification of Metaphysical Terms. 2s.

John Bull. Prophecy applied to passing Events. 1s.

The History and Antiquities of Dissenting Churches, Chapels, and Meeting Houses, in and about the City of London, from the rise of Non-conformity to the present time; including a Chronological Series of Ministers at each place and Biographical Anecdotes of their Lives and Characters. By Walter Wilson. 8vo. Numbers I. II. III. and IV. 2s. 6d. each. To be continued monthly.

An Inquiry into the Causes which oppose the Conversion of the Hindus of India to Christianity, and render the attempt to accomplish it extremely hazardous to the Interests of the East India Company and the Nation, and to the personal safety of Englishmen in India. By a Proprietor of East India Stock.

A Critical Essay on the Ninth Book of Bishop Warburton's Divine Legation of Moses. 4s.

A Discourse on the Being of God, as discoverable by Reason; intended as a popular antidote against modern Infidelity. By the Rev. Chris. Hodgson, L. L. B. 8vo. 1s. 6d.

The Curate's Catechism; or a Familiar Exposition of the Church Catechism. By the Rev. B. Thistlethwaite, B. A. 1s.

A Tribute to the Memory of William Cowper, Esq. Author of the Task, &c. occasioned by the perusal of his Works. By J. T. S. 2s.

The complete Works of the late Rev. John Newton. 6 vols. 8vo. 2l. 14s.

# CORRESPONDENCE.

We have received six subscriptions, of five shillings each, to the second volume of "Ch. Richardson's" Poems, about to be published by Mrs. Cappe. One of the subscribers suggests that the second volume should be printed and done up uniformly with the first, and that the residence as well as name of every subscriber should be published.——Inquisitor may satisfy himself by referring to p. 222. col. 2. of the present volume.——After much fruitless study, we find ourselves unable to comprehend W. M's. Letter on the atonement. We know nothing of "atonement made by Adam;" or of an "atonement experienced from the offence of Eve." To us who are not versed in such deep mysteries, it seems nonsense of the lowest sort to talk of an atonement first with respect to the body alone, next with respect to the soul, then with respect to the spirit, and lastly with respect to them all together. As a theologian, W. M. surely mistakes his proper denomination: in the haste of concluding his letter he must have subscribed himself "an Unitarian" by a blunder; the correct signature would have been "an Unique."——"Mr. Betsham" has favoured us with a paper on the "Consistency and Truth of Divine Revelation" in reply to Veritas (p. 468.) which will appear in our next number.——E. N's. Objections to the Doctrine of Necessity; the Letter on the Abolition of War; the Criticisms of Primitivus, &c. &c. are received and intended for insertion.——To A. B's. questions, we beg leave to make the following answers. I. A Christian minister is "not out of his province" in asserting the sole authority of Jesus Christ over conscience. II. The assertion of Dissenting Principles is "not an opposition to the Government," those principles being sanctioned by law. III. "Condemning war" cannot be considered as "reflecting on kingly government," without a more severe sarcasm on royalty than a good subject should hazard. IV. A Dissenting teacher is bound to preach, "not what pleases his congregation," but what they in his honest judgment "need to be taught." V. The best way of admonishing a minister is not perhaps by "anonymous letters." VI. If a hearer choose, out of affection, to send his minister an anonymous sheet of abuse, he is at liberty at least to *pay the postage*. VII. It admits of a doubt, certainly, whether *Saturday night* be the best time sending in disrespectful anonymous letters addressed to Dissenting ministers.